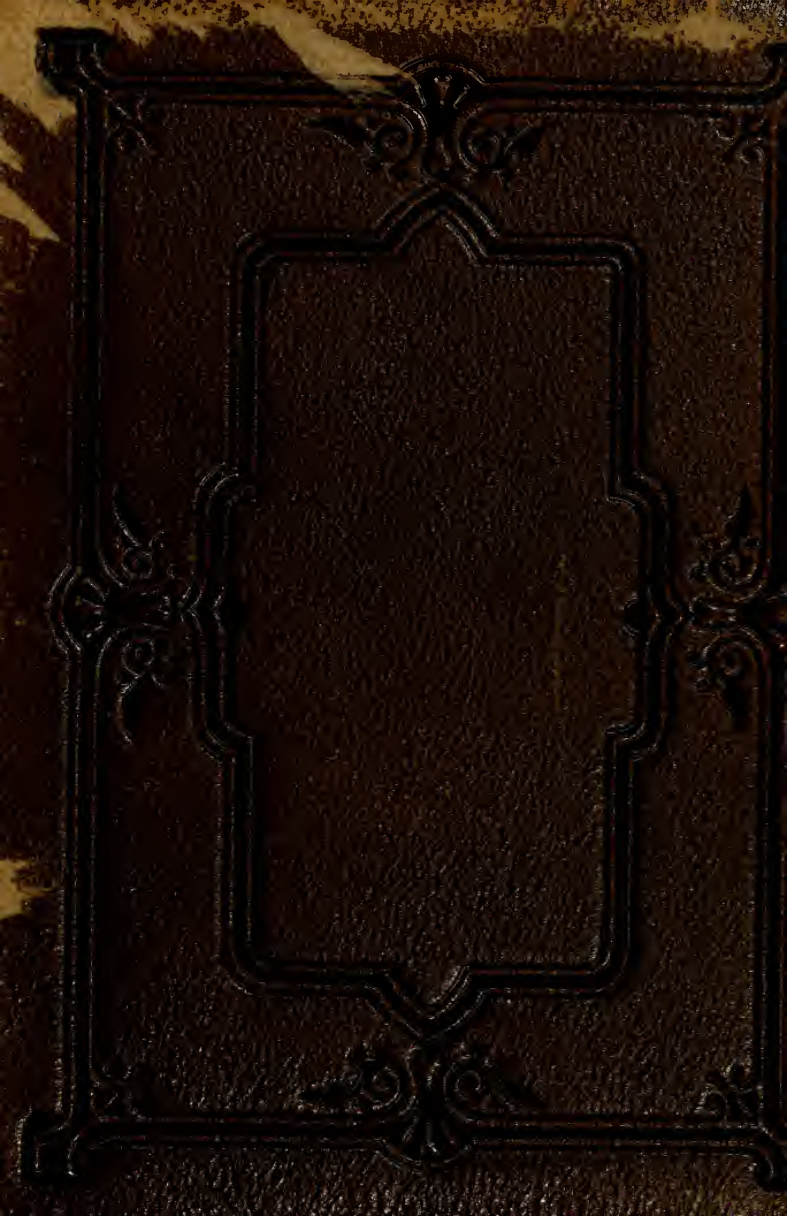

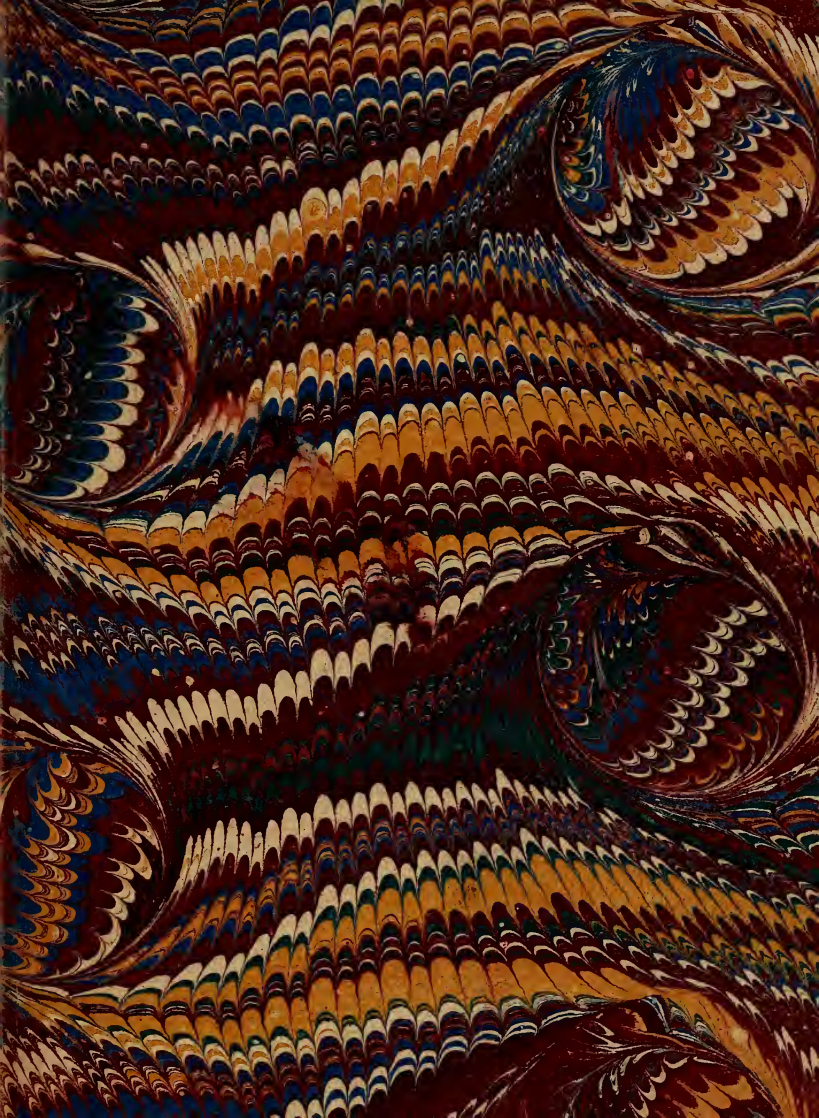

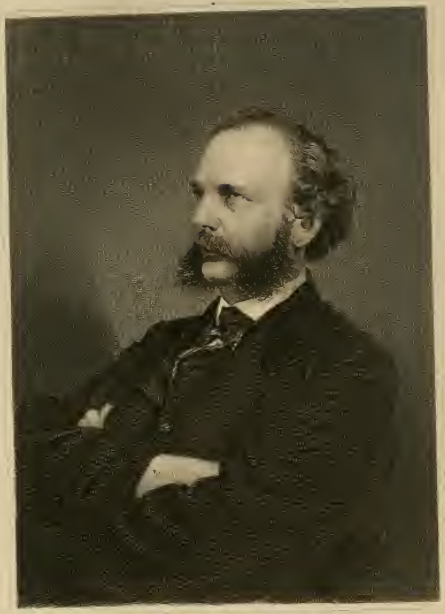

Jno. Godfrey Saxe

THE

POEMS

OF

JOHN GODFREY SAXE.

COMPLETE EDITION.

With Illustrations.

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TO

MY BEST FRIEND,

(A DIAMOND EDITION OF A WOMAN,)

I INSCRIBE

This Diamond Edition of the Poems

OF

HER HUSBAND.

J. G. S.

Brooklyn, N. Y., Sept. 1, 1873.

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POEMS.

THE POET'S LICENSE.

THE Poet's License! — Some there are
Who hold the false opinion
'T is but a meagre privilege
Confined to Art's dominion;
The right to rhyme quite unrestrained
By certain rigid fetters
Which bind the colder men of prose
Within the realm of letters.

Ah no! — I deem 't is something more,
And something vastly higher,
To which the proudest bard on earth
May worthily aspire.
The Poet's License! — 't is the right,
Within the rule of duty,
To look on all delightful things
Throughout the world of beauty.

To gaze with rapture at the stars
That in the skies are glowing;
To see the gems of perfect dye
That in the woods are growing, —
And more than sage astronomer,
And more than learnéd florist,
To read the glorious homilies
Of Firmament and Forest.

When Nature gives a gorgeous rose,
Or yields the simplest fern,
She writes this motto on the leaves, —
"To whom it may concern!"
And so it is the poet comes
And revels in her bowers,
And, though another hold the land,
Is owner of the flowers.

O, nevermore let Ignorance
With heedless iteration
Repeat the phrase as meaning aught
Of trivial estimation;
The Poet's License! — 't is the fee
Of earth and sky and river
To him who views them royally,
To have and hold forever!

TREASURE IN HEAVEN.

RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED TO GEORGE PEABODY, ESQ.

"What I spent, I had; what I left,
I lost; what I gave, I have!"
OLD EPITAPH.

I.

EVERY coin of earthly treasure
We have lavished, upon earth,
For our simple worldly pleasure,
May be reckoned something worth;
For the spending was not losing,
Though the purchase were but small;

It has perished with the using:
We have had it, — that is all!

II.

All the gold we leave behind us
When we turn to dust again
(Though our avarice may blind us),
We have gathered quite in vain;
Since we neither can direct it,
By the winds of fortune tossed,
Nor in other worlds expect it:
What we hoarded, we have lost.

III.

But each merciful oblation —
(Seed of pity wisely sown),
What we gave in self-negation,
We may safely call our own;
For the treasure freely given
Is the treasure that we hoard,
Since the angels keep in Heaven
What is lent unto the Lord!

I'M GROWING OLD.

My days pass pleasantly away;
My nights are blest with sweetest sleep;
I feel no symptoms of decay;
I have no cause to mourn nor weep;
My foes are impotent and shy;
My friends are neither false nor cold,
And yet, of late, I often sigh, —
I 'm growing old!

My growing talk of olden times,
My growing thirst for early news,
My growing apathy to rhymes,
My growing love of easy shoes,
My growing hate of crowds and noise,
My growing fear of taking cold,
All whisper, in the plainest voice,
I 'm growing old!

I 'm growing fonder of my staff;
I 'm growing dimmer in the eyes;
I 'm growing fainter in my laugh;
I 'm growing deeper in my sighs;
I 'm growing careless of my dress;
I 'm growing frugal of my gold;
I 'm growing wise; I 'm growing, — yes, —
I 'm growing old!

I see it in my changing taste;
I see it in my changing hair;
I see it in my growing waist;
I see it in my growing heir;
A thousand signs proclaim the truth,
As plain as truth was ever told,
That, even in my vaunted youth,
I 'm growing old!

Ah me! my very laurels breathe
The tale in my reluctant ears,
And every boon the Hours bequeath
But makes me debtor to the Years!
E'en Flattery's honeyed words declare
The secret she would fain withhold,
And tells me in "How young you are!"
I 'm growing old!

Thanks for the years! — whose rapid flight
My sombre Muse too sadly sings;
Thanks for the gleams of golden light
That tint the darkness of their wings;
The light that beams from out the sky,
Those heavenly mansions to unfold
Where all are blest, and none may sigh,
"I 'm growing old!"

THE STORY OF LIFE.

SAY, what is life! 'T is to be born;
A helpless *Babe*, to greet the light
With a sharp wail, as if the morn
Foretold a cloudy noon and night;
To weep, to sleep, and weep again,
With sunny smiles between; and then?

And then apace the infant grows
To be a laughing, puling boy,
Happy, despite his little woes,
Were he but conscious of his joy;
To be, in short, from two to ten,
A merry, moody *Child;* and then?

And then, in coat and trousers clad,
To learn to say the Decalogue,
And break it; an unthinking *Lad*,
With mirth and mischief all agog;
A truant oft by field and fen
To capture butterflies; and then?

And then, increased in strength and size,
To be, anon, a *Youth* full-grown;
A hero in his mother's eyes,
A young Apollo in his own;
To imitate the ways of men
In fashionable sins; and then?

And then, at last, to be a *Man;*
To fall in love; to woo and wed;
With seething brain to scheme and plan;
To gather gold, or toil for bread;
To sue for fame with tongue or pen,
And gain or lose the prize; and then?

And then in gray and wrinkled *Eld*
To mourn the speed of life's decline;
To praise the scenes his youth beheld,
And dwell in memory of Lang-Syne;
To dream awhile with darkened ken,
Then drop into his grave; and then?

MY CASTLE IN SPAIN.

THERE 's a castle in Spain, very charming to see,
Though built without money or toil;
Of this handsome estate I am owner in fee,
And paramount lord of the soil;
And oft as I may I 'm accustomed to go
And live, like a king, in my Spanish Chateau!

There 's a dame most bewitchingly rounded and ripe,
Whose wishes are never absurd;
Who does n't object to my smoking a pipe,
Nor insist on the ultimate word;
In short, she 's the pink of perfection, you know;
And she lives, like a queen, in my Spanish Chateau!

I 've a family too; the delightfulest girls,
And a bevy of beautiful boys;
All quite the reverse of those juvenile churls
Whose pleasure is mischief and noise;
No modern *Cornelia* might venture to show
Such jewels as those in my Spanish Chateau!

I have servants who seek their contentment in mine,
And always mind what they are at;
Who never embezzle the sugar and wine,
And slander the innocent cat;
Neither saucy, nor careless, nor stupidly slow
Are the servants who wait in my Spanish Chateau!

I have pleasant companions; most affable folk,
And each with the heart of a brother;
Keen wits, who enjoy an antagonist's joke,
And beauties who 're fond of each other;
Such people, indeed, as you never may know,
Unless you should come to my Spanish Chateau!

I have friends, whose commission for wearing the name
In kindness unfailing is shown;
Who pay to another the duty they claim,
And deem his successes their own;
Who joy in his gladness, and weep at his woe;
You 'll find them (where else?) in my Spanish Chateau!

"*O si sic semper!*" I oftentimes say
(Though 't is idle, I know, to complain),
To think that again I must force me away
From my beautiful castle in Spain!
Ah! would that my stars had determined it so
I might live the year round in my Spanish Chateau!

SPES EST VATES.

There is a saying of the ancient sages:
No noble human thought,
However buried in the dust of ages,
Can ever come to naught.

With kindred faith, that knows no base dejection,
Beyond the sages' scope
I see, afar, the final resurrection
Of every glorious hope.

I see, as parcel of a new creation,
The beatific hour
When every bud of lofty aspiration
Shall blossom into flower.

We are not mocked; it was not in derision
God made our spirits free;
The poet's dreams are but the dim prevision
Of blessings that shall be, —

When they who lovingly have hoped and trusted,
Despite some transient fears,
Shall see Life's jarring elements adjusted,
And rounded into spheres!

THE GIFTS OF THE GODS.

The saying is wise, though it sounds like a jest,
That "The gods don't allow us to be in their debt,"
For though we may think we are specially blest,
We are certain to pay for the favors we get!

Are Riches the boon? Nay, be not elate;
The final account is n't settled as yet;
Old Care has a mortgage on every estate,
And that 's what you pay for the wealth that you get!

Is Honor the prize? It were easy to name
What sorrows and perils her pathway beset;
Grim Hate and Detraction accompany Fame,
And that 's what you pay for the honor you get!

Is Learning a treasure? How charming the pair
When Talent and Culture are lovingly met;
But Labor unceasing is grievous to bear,
And that 's what you pay for the learning you get!

Is Genius worth having? There is n't a doubt;
And yet what a price on the blessing is set, —
To suffer more with it than dunces without,
And that 's what you pay for the genius you get!

Is Beauty a blessing? To have it for nought
The gods never grant to their veriest pet;
Pale Envy reminds you the jewel is bought,
And that 's what you pay for the beauty you get!

But Pleasure? Alas! — how prolific of pain!
Gay Pleasure is followed by gloomy Regret;
And often Repentance is one of her train,
And that 's what you pay for the pleasure you get!

But surely in Friendship we all may secure
An excellent gift; never doubt it, — and yet
With much to enjoy there is much to endure,
And that 's what we pay for the friendship we get!

But then there is Love? — Nay, speak not too soon;
The fondest of hearts may have reason to fret;
For Fear and Bereavement attend on the boon,
And that 's what we pay for the love that we get!

And thus it appears — though it sounds like a jest —
The gods don't allow us to be in their debt;
And though we may think we are specially blest,
We are certain to pay for whatever we get!

THE OLD CHAPEL-BELL.

A BALLAD.

Within a churchyard's sacred ground,
Whose fading tablets tell
Where they who built the village church
In solemn silence dwell,
Half hidden in the earth, there lies
An ancient Chapel-Bell.

Broken, decayed, and covered o'er
With mouldering leaves and rust;

Its very name and date concealed
Beneath a cankering crust;
Forgotten, — like its early friends,
Who sleep in neighboring dust.

Yet it was once a trusty Bell,
Of most sonorous lung,
And many a joyous wedding-peal,
And many a knell had rung,
Ere Time had cracked its brazen sides,
And broke its iron tongue.

And many a youthful heart had danced,
In merry Christmas-time,
To hear its pleasant roundelay,
Sung out in ringing rhyme;
And many a worldly thought been checked
To list its sabbath chime.

A youth — a bright and happy boy —
One sultry summer's day,
Aweary of his bat and ball,
Chanced hitherward to stray,
To read a little book he had,
And rest him from his play.

"A soft and shady spot is this!"
The rosy youngster cried,
And sat him down, beneath a tree,
That ancient Bell beside;
(But, hidden in the tangled grass,
The Bell he ne'er espied.)

Anon, a mist fell on his book,
The letters seemed to stir,
And though, full oft, his flagging sight
The boy essayed to spur,
The mazy page was quickly lost
Beneath a cloudy blur.

And while he marvelled much at this,
And wondered how it came,
He felt a languor creeping o'er
His young and weary frame,
And heard a voice, a gentle voice,
That plainly spoke his name.

That gentle voice that named his name
Entranced him like a spell
Upon his ear so very near
And suddenly it fell,
Yet soft and musical, as 't were
The whisper of a bell.

"Since last I spoke," the voice began,
"Seems many a dreary year!
(Albeit, 't is only since thy birth
I've lain neglected here!)
Pray list, while I rehearse a tale
Behooves thee much to hear.

"Once, from yon ivied tower, I watched
The villagers around,
And gave to all their joys and griefs
A sympathetic sound, —
But most are sleeping, now, within
This consecrated ground.

"I used to ring my merriest peal
To hail the blushing bride;
I sadly tolled for men cut down
In strength and manly pride;
And solemnly, — not mournfully, —
When little children died.

"But, chief, my duty was to bid
The villagers repair,
On each returning sabbath morn
Unto the House of Prayer,
And in his own appointed place
The Saviour's mercy share.

"Ah! well I mind me of a child,
A gleesome, happy maid,

Who came, with constant step, to church,
In comely garb arrayed,
And knelt her down full solemnly,
And penitently prayed.

"And oft, when church was done, I marked
That little maiden near
This pleasant spot, with book in hand,
As you are sitting here, —
She read the Story of the Cross,
And wept with grief sincere.

"Years rolled away, — and I beheld
The child to woman grown;
Her cheek was fairer, and her eye
With brighter lustre shone;
But childhood's truth and innocence
Were still the maiden's own.

"I never rang a merrier peal
Than when, a joyous bride,
She stood beneath the sacred porch,
A noble youth beside,
And plighted him her maiden troth,
In maiden love and pride.

"I never tolled a deeper knell,
Than when, in after years,
They laid her in the churchyard here,
Where this low mound appears, —
(The very grave, my boy, that you
Are watering now with tears!)

"*It is thy mother!* gentle boy,
That claims this tale of mine, —
Thou art a flower whose fatal birth
Destroyed the parent vine!

A precious flower art thou, my child, —
TWO LIVES WERE GIVEN FOR THINE!

"One was thy sainted mother's, when
She gave thee mortal birth;
And one thy Saviour's, when in death
He shook the solid earth;
Go! boy, and live as may befit
Thy life's exceeding worth!"

The boy awoke, as from a dream,
And, thoughtful, looked around,
But nothing saw, save at his feet
His mother's lowly mound,
And by its side that ancient Bell,
Half hidden in the ground!

COMPENSATION.

I.

WHEN once, in "Merrie England,"
A prisoner of state
Stood waiting death or exile,
Submissive to his fate,
He made this famous answer, —
"*Si longa, levis;*
Si dura, brevis;
Go tell your tyrant chief,
Long pains are light ones,
Cruel ones are brief!"

II.

Alas! we all are culprits;
Our bodies doomed to bear
Discomforts and diseases,
And none may 'scape his share;
But God in pity orders,
Si longa, levis;
Si dura, brevis;
He grants us this relief,
Long pains are light ones,
Cruel ones are brief.

III.

Nor less the mind must suffer
  Its weight of care and woe,
Afflictions and bereavements
  Itself can only know;
But let us still remember,
  Si longa, levis;
  Si dura, brevis;
  To moderate our grief, —
Long pains are light ones,
  Cruel ones are brief.

THE OLD MAN'S MOTTO.

"Give me a motto!" said a youth
  To one whom years had rendered wise;
"Some pleasant thought, or weighty truth,
  That briefest syllables comprise;
Some word of warning or of cheer
To grave upon my signet here.

"And, reverend father," said the boy,
  "Since life, they say, is ever made
A mingled web of grief and joy;
  Since cares may come and pleasures fade, —
Pray, let the motto have a range
Of meaning matching every change."

"Sooth!" said the sire, "methinks you ask
  A labor something over-nice,
That well a finer brain might task.
  What think you, lad, of this device
(Older than I, though I am gray),
'T is simple, — 'This will pass away'?

"When wafted on by Fortune's breeze,
  In endless peace thou seem'st to glide,
Prepare betimes for rougher seas.
  And check the boast of foolish pride;
Though smiling joy is thine to-day,
Remember, 'This will pass away!'

"When all the sky is draped in black,
  And, beaten by tempestuous gales,
Thy shuddering ship seems all a-wrack,
  Then trim again thy tattered sails;
To grim Despair be not a prey;
Bethink thee, 'This will pass away!'

"Thus, O my son, be not o'er-proud,
  Nor yet cast down; judge thou aright;
When skies are clear, expect the cloud;
  In darkness, wait the coming light;
Whatever be thy fate to-day,
Remember, 'This will pass away!'"

MAXIMILIAN.

Not with a craven spirit he
Submitted to the harsh decree
That bade him die before his time,
Cut off in manhood's golden prime, —
  Poor Maximilian!

And some who marked his noble mien,
His dauntless heart, his soul serene,
Have deemed they saw a martyr die,
And chorused forth the solemn cry,
  "Great Maximilian!"

Alas! Ambition was his sin;
He staked his life a throne to win;
Counted amiss the fearful cost
(As chiefs have done before), — and lost!
Rash Maximilian!

'T is not the victim's tragic fate,
Nor calm endurance, makes him great;
Mere lust of empire and renown
Can never claim the martyr's crown,
Brave Maximilian!

Alas! it fell, that, in thy aim
To win a sovereign's power and fame,
Thy better nature lost its force,
And royal crimes disgraced thy course,
King Maximilian!

Alas! what ground for mercy's plea
In his behalf, whose fell decree
Gave soldiers unto felons' graves,
And freemen to the doom of slaves, —
Fierce Maximilian?

I loathe the rude, barbaric wrath
That slew thee in thy vent'rous path;
But "they who take," thus saith the Lord,
"Shall also perish by the sword,"
Doomed Maximilian!

But, when I think upon the scene, —
Thy fearful fate, thy wretched queen, —
And mark how bravely thou didst die,
I breathe again the pitying sigh,
"Poor Maximilian!"

WISHING.

Of all amusements for the mind,
From logic down to fishing,
There is n't one that you can find
So very cheap as "wishing."
A very choice diversion too,
If we but rightly use it,
And not, as we are apt to do,
Pervert it, and abuse it.

I wish, — a common wish, indeed, —
My purse were somewhat fatter,
That I might cheer the child of need,
And not my pride to flatter;
That I might make Oppression reel,
As only gold can make it,
And break the Tyrant's rod of steel,
As only gold can break it.

I wish — that Sympathy and Love,
And every human passion
That has its origin above,
Would come and keep in fashion;
That Scorn, and Jealousy, and Hate,
And every base emotion,
Were buried fifty fathom deep
Beneath the waves of Ocean!

I wish — that friends were always true,
And motives always pure;
I wish the good were not so few,
I wish the bad were fewer;
I wish that parsons ne'er forgot
To heed their pious teaching;
I wish that practising was not
So different from preaching!

I wish — that modest worth might be
Appraised with truth and candor;

I wish that innocence were free
From treachery and slander ;
I wish that men their vows would mind;
That women ne'er were rovers;
I wish that wives were always kind,
And husbands always lovers!

I wish — in fine — that Joy and Mirth,
And every good Ideal,
May come erewhile, throughout the earth,
To be the glorious Real;
Till God shall every creature bless
With his supremest blessing,
And Hope be lost in Happiness,
And Wishing in Possessing!

THE WAY OF THE WORLD.

I.

A YOUTH would marry a maiden,
For fair and fond was she;
But she was rich, and he was poor,
And so it might not be.
A lady never could wear —
Her mother held it firm —
A gown that came of an India plant,
Instead of an India worm! —
And so the cruel word was spoken;
And so it was two hearts were broken.

II.

A youth would marry a maiden,
For fair and fond was she;
But he was high and she was low,
And so it might not be.
A man who had worn a spur,
In ancient battle won,
Had sent it down with great renown,
To goad his future son! —
And so the cruel word was spoken;
And so it was two hearts were broken.

III.

A youth would marry a maiden,
For fair and fond was she;
But their sires disputed about the Mass,
And so it might not be.
A couple of wicked kings,
Three hundred years agone,
Had played at a royal game of chess,
And the Church had been a pawn! —
And so the cruel word was spoken;
And so it was two hearts were broken.

A POET'S ELEGY.

HERE rests, at last, from worldly care and strife,
A gentle man-of-rhyme,
Not all unknown to fame, — whose lays and life
Fell short of the sublime.

Yet, as his poems ('t was the critics' praise)
Betrayed a careful mind,
His life, with less of license than his lays,
To Virtue was inclined.

Whate'er of Wit the kindly Muse supplied
He ever strove to bend
To Folly's hurt; nor once with wanton pride
Employed to pain a friend.

He loved a quip, but in his jesting vein
With studious care effaced

The doubtful word that threatened to profane
The sacred or the chaste.

He loathed the covert, diabolic jeer
That conscience undermines;
No hinted sacrilege nor sceptic sneer
Lurks in his laughing lines.

With satire's sword to pierce the false and wrong;
A ballad to invent
That bore a wholesome sermon in the song, —
Such was the poet's bent.

In social converse, "happy as a king,"
When colder men refrained
From daring flights, he gave his fancy wing
And freedom unrestrained.

And golden thoughts, at times, — a motley brood, —
Came flashing from the mine;
And fools who saw him in his merry mood
Accused the untasted wine.

He valued friendship's favor more than fame,
And paid his social dues;
He loved his Art, — but held his manly name
Far dearer than his Muse.

And partial friends, while gayly laughing o'er
The merry lines they quote,
Say with a sigh, "To us the man was more
Than aught he ever wrote!"

THE MOURNER A LA MODE.

I saw her last night at a party
(The elegant party at Mead's),
And looking remarkably hearty
For a widow so young in her weeds;
Yet I know she was suffering sorrow
Too deep for the tongue to express, —
Or why had she chosen to borrow
So much from the language of dress?

Her shawl was as sable as night;
And her gloves were as dark as her shawl;
And her jewels — that flashed in the light —
Were black as a funeral pall;
Her robe had the hue of the rest,
(How nicely it fitted her shape!)
And the grief that was heaving her breast
Boiled over in billows of crape!

What tears of vicarious woe,
That else might have sullied her face,
Were kindly permitted to flow
In ripples of ebony lace!
While even her fan, in its play,
Had quite a lugubrious scope,
And seemed to be waving away
The ghost of the angel of Hope!

Yet rich as the robes of a queen
Was the sombre apparel she wore;
I'm certain I never had seen
Such a sumptuous sorrow before;
And I could n't help thinking the beauty,
In mourning the loved and the lost,
Was doing her conjugal duty
Altogether regardless of cost!

One surely would say a devotion
Performed at so vast an expens

Betrayed an excess of emotion
That was really something immense;
And yet as I viewed, at my leisure,
Those tokens of tender regard,
I thought: — It is scarce without measure —
The sorrow that goes by the yard!

Ah! grief is a curious passion;
And yours — I am sorely afraid
The very next phase of the fashion
Will find it beginning to fade;
Though dark are the shadows of grief,
The morning will follow the night,
Half-tints will betoken relief,
Till joy shall be symboled in white!

Ah well! it were idle to quarrel
With Fashion, or aught she may do;
And so I conclude with a moral
And metaphor — warranted new: —
When *measles* come handsomely out,
The patient is safest, they say;
And the *Sorrow* is mildest, no doubt,
That works in a similar way!

THE EXPECTED SHIP.

THUS I heard a poet say,
As he sang in merry glee,
"Ah! 't will be a golden day,
When my ship comes o'er the sea!

"I do know a cottage fine,
As a poet's house should be,
And the cottage shall be mine,
When my ship comes o'er the sea!

"I do know a maiden fair,
Fair, and fond, and dear to me,
And we 'll be a wedded pair,
When my ship comes o'er the sea!

"And within that cottage fine,
Blest as any king may be,
Every pleasure shall be mine,
When my ship comes o'er the sea!

"To be rich is to be great;
Love is only for the free;
Grant me patience, while I wait
Till my ship comes o'er the sea!"

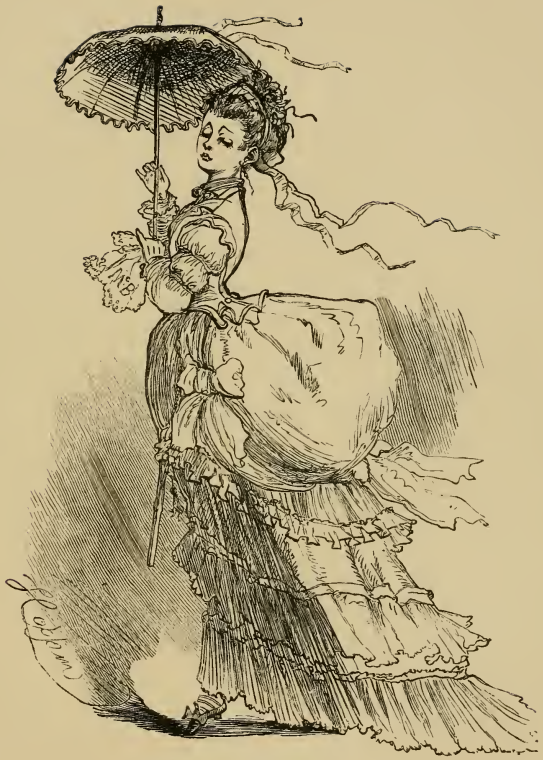
Months and years have come and gone
Since the poet sang to me,
Yet he still keeps hoping on
For the ship from o'er the sea!

Thus the siren voice of Hope
Whispers still to you and me
Of something in the future's scope,
Some golden ship from o'er the sea!

Never sailor yet hath found,
Looking windward or to lee,
Any vessel homeward bound,
Like that ship from o'er the sea!

Never comes the shining deck;
But that tiny cloud may be —
Though it seems the merest speck —
The promised ship from o'er the sea!

Never looms the swelling sail,
But the wind is blowing free,
And *that* may be the precious gale
That brings the ship from o'er the sea!



THE HEAD AND THE HEART.

THE head is stately, calm, and wise,
And bears a princely part;
And down below in secret lies
The warm, impulsive heart.

The lordly head that sits above,
The heart that beats below,
Their several office plainly prove,
Their true relation show.

The head, erect, serene, and cool,
Endowed with Reason's art,
Was set aloft to guide and rule
The throbbing, wayward heart.

And from the head, as from the higher,
Comes every glorious thought;
And in the heart's transforming fire
All noble deeds are wrought.

Yet each is best when both unite
To make the man complete;
What were the heat without the light?
The light, without the heat?

THE PROUD MISS MACBRIDE.

A LEGEND OF GOTHAM.

I.

O, TERRIBLY proud was Miss MacBride,
The very personification of Pride,
As she minced along in Fashion's tide,
Adown Broadway, — on the proper side, —
When the golden sun was setting;
There was pride in the head she carried so high,
Pride in her lip, and pride in her eye,
And a world of pride in the very sigh
That her stately bosom was fretting;

II.

A sigh that a pair of elegant feet,
Sandalled in satin, should kiss the street, —
The very same that the vulgar greet
In common leather not over "neat," —
For such is the common booting;
(And Christian tears may well be shed,
That even among our gentlemen bred,
The glorious day of Morocco is dead,
And Day and Martin are raining instead,
On a much inferior footing!)

III.

O, terribly proud was Miss MacBride,
Proud of her beauty, and proud of her pride,
And proud of fifty matters beside,
That would n't have borne dissection;
Proud of her wit, and proud of her walk,
Proud of her teeth, and proud of her talk,
Proud of "knowing cheese from chalk,"
On a very slight inspection!

IV.

Proud abroad, and proud at home,
Proud wherever she chanced to come,
When she was glad, and when she was glum;
Proud as the head of a Saracen

Over the door of a tippling shop! —
Proud as a duchess, proud as a fop,
"Proud as a boy with a bran-new top,"
Proud beyond comparison!

V.

It seems a singular thing to say,
But her very senses led her astray
Respecting all humility;
In sooth, her dull auricular drum
Could find in *Humble* only a "hum,"
And heard no sound of "gentle" come,
In talking about gentility.

VI.

What *Lowly* meant she did n't know,
For she always avoided "everything low,"
With care the most punctilious,
And queerer still, the audible sound
Of "super-silly" she never had found
In the adjective supercilious!

VII.

The meaning of *Meek* she never knew,
But imagined the phrase had something to do
With "Moses," — a peddling German Jew,
Who, like all hawkers the country through,
Was a person of no position;
And it seemed to her exceedingly plain,
If the word was really known to pertain
To a vulgar German, it was n't germane
To a lady of high condition!

VIII.

Even her graces, — not her grace,
For that was in the "vocative case," —
Chilled with the touch of her icy face,
Sat very stiffly upon her;
She never confessed a favor aloud,
Like one of the simple, common crowd,
But coldly smiled, and faintly bowed,
As who should say: "You do me proud,
And do yourself an honor!"

IX.

And yet the pride of Miss MacBride,
Although it had fifty hobbies to ride,
Had really no foundation;
But, like the fabrics that gossips devise, —
Those single stories that often arise
And grow till they reach a four-story size,
Was merely a fancy creation!

X.

'T is a curious fact as ever was known
In human nature, but often shown
Alike in castle and cottage,
That pride, like pigs of a certain breed,
Will manage to live and thrive on "feed"
As poor as a pauper's pottage!

XI.

That her wit should never have made her vain,
Was, like her face, sufficiently plain;
And as to her musical powers,

Although she sang until she was hoarse,
And issued notes with a Banker's force,
They were just such notes as we never indorse
For any acquaintance of ours!

XII.

Her birth, indeed, was uncommonly high,
For Miss MacBride first opened her eye
Through a skylight dim, on the light of the sky;
But pride is a curious passion,
And in talking about her wealth and worth
She always forgot to mention her birth,
To people of rank and fashion!

XIII.

Of all the notable things on earth,
The queerest one is pride of birth,
Among our "fierce Democracie"!
A bridge across a hundred years,
Without a prop to save it from sneers, —
Not even a couple of rotten Peers, —
A thing for laughter, fleers, and jeers,
Is American aristocracy!

XIV.

English and Irish, French and Spanish,
German, Italian, Dutch, and Danish,
Crossing their veins until they vanish
In one conglomeration!
So subtle a tangle of Blood, indeed,
No modern Harvey will ever succeed
In finding the circulation!

XV.

Depend upon it, my snobbish friend,
Your family thread you can't ascend,
Without good reason to apprehend
You may find it waxed at the farther end
By some plebeian vocation;
Or, worse than that, your boasted Line
May end in a loop of stronger twine,
That plagued some worthy relation!

XVI.

But Miss MacBride had something beside
Her lofty birth to nourish her pride;
For rich was the old paternal MacBride,
According to public rumor;
And he lived "Up Town," in a splendid square,
And kept his daughter on dainty fare,
And gave her gems that were rich and rare,
And the finest rings and things to wear,
And feathers enough to plume her!

XVII.

An honest mechanic was John MacBride
As ever an honest calling plied,
Or graced an honest ditty;
For John had worked, in his early day,
In "Pots and Pearls," the legends say,
And kept a shop with a rich array

Of things in the soap and candle way,
In the lower part of the city.

XVIII.

No *rara avis* was honest John,
(That 's the Latin for "sable swan,")
Though, in one of his fancy flashes,
A wicked wag, who meant to deride,
Called honest John "Old *Phœnix* MacBride,
"Because he rose from his ashes!"

XIX.

Alack! for many ambitious beaux!
She hung their hopes upon her nose,
(The figure is quite Horatian!) *
Until from habit the member grew
As queer a thing as ever you knew
Turn up to observation!

XX.

A thriving tailor begged her hand,
But she gave "the fellow" to understand,
By a violent manual action,
She perfectly scorned the best of his clan,
And reckoned the ninth of any man
An exceedingly Vulgar Fraction!

XXI.

Another, whose sign was a golden boot,
Was mortified with a bootless suit,
In a way that was quite appalling;
For though a regular *sutor* by trade,
He was n't a suitor to suit the maid,
Who cut him off with a saw, — and bade
"The cobbler keep to his calling."

XXII.

(The Muse must let a secret out, —
There is n't the faintest shadow of doubt,
That folks who oftenest sneer and flout
At "the dirty, low mechanicals,"
Are they whose sires, by pounding their knees,
Or coiling their legs, or trades like these,
Contrived to win their children ease
From poverty's galling manacles.)

XXIII.

A rich tobacconist comes and sues,
And, thinking the lady would scarce refuse
A man of his wealth and liberal views,
Began, at once, with, "If you choose, —
And could you really love him — "
But the lady spoiled his speech in a huff,
With an answer rough and ready enough,
To let him know she was up to snuff,
And altogether above him!

XXIV.

A young attorney of winning grace
Was scarce allowed to "open his face,"
Ere Miss MacBride had closed his case
With true judicial celerity;
For the lawyer was poor, and "seedy" to boot,

* "Omnia suspendens naso."

And to say the lady discarded his *suit*,
Is merely a double verity.

XXV.

The last of those who came to court
Was a lively beau of the dapper sort,
"Without any visible means of support," —
A crime by no means flagrant
In one who wears an elegant coat,
But the very point on which they vote
A ragged fellow "a vagrant."

XXVI.

A courtly fellow was Dapper Jim,
Sleek and supple, and tall and trim,
And smooth of tongue as neat of limb;
And, maugre his meagre pocket,
You 'd say, from the glittering tales he told,
That Jim had slept in a cradle of gold,
With Fortunatus to rock it!

XXVII.

Now Dapper Jim his courtship plied
(I wish the fact could be denied)
With an eye to the purse of the old MacBride,
And really "nothing shorter"!
For he said to himself, in his greedy lust,
"Whenever he dies, — as die he must, —
And yields to Heaven his vital trust,
He 's very sure to 'come down with his dust,'
In behalf of his only daughter."

XXVIII.

And the very magnificent Miss MacBride,
Half in love and half in pride,
Quite graciously relented;
And tossing her head, and turning her back,
No token of proper pride to lack,
To be a Bride without the "Mac,"
With much disdain, consented.

XXIX.

Alas! that people who 've got their box
Of cash beneath the best of locks,
Secure from all financial shocks,
Should stock their fancy with fancy stocks,
And madly rush upon Wall Street rocks,
Without the least apology;
Alas! that people whose money affairs
Are sound beyond all need of repairs,
Should ever tempt the bulls and bears
Of Mammon's fierce Zoölogy!

XXX.

Old John MacBride, one fatal day,
Became the unresisting prey
Of Fortune's undertakers;
And staking his all on a single die,
His foundered bark went high and dry
Among the brokers and breakers!

XXXI.

At his trade again in the very shop
Where, years before, he let it drop,
He follows his ancient calling, —
Cheerily, too, in poverty's spite,

And sleeping quite as sound at night,
As when, at Fortune's giddy height,
He used to wake with a dizzy fright
From a dismal dream of falling.

XXXII.

But alas for the haughty Miss MacBride!
'T was such a shock to her precious pride,
She could n't recover, although she tried
Her jaded spirits to rally;
'T was a dreadful change in human affairs
From a Place "Up Town" to a nook "Up Stairs,"
From an Avenue down to an Alley!

XXXIII.

'T was little condolence she had, God wot,
From her "troops of friends," who had n't forgot
The airs she used to borrow;
They had civil phrases enough, but yet
'T was plain to see that their "deepest regret"
Was a different thing from Sorrow!

XXXIV.

They owned it could n't have well been worse,
To go from a full to an empty purse;
To expect a reversion and get a "reverse,"
Was truly a dismal feature;
But it was n't strange, — they whispered, — at all;
That the Summer of pride should have its Fall
Was quite according to Nature!

XXXV.

And one of those chaps who make a pun —
As if it were quite legitimate fun
To be blazing away at every one,
With a regular double-loaded gun —
Remarked that moral transgression
Always brings retributive stings
To candle-makers, as well as kings!
And making light of cereous things
Was a very wick-ed profession!

XXXVI.

And vulgar people, the saucy churls,
Inquired about "the price of Pearls,"
And mocked at her situation;
"She was n't ruined, they ventured to hope;
Because she was poor, she need n't mope, —
Few people were better off for soap,
And that was a consolation!"

XXXVII.

And to make her cup of woe run over,
Her elegant, ardent, plighted lover
Was the very first to forsake her;
He quite regretted the step, 't was true, —
The lady had pride enough for two,
But that alone would never do
To quiet the butcher and baker!

XXXVIII.

And now the unhappy Miss MacBride,
The merest ghost of her early pride,
Bewails her lonely position;

Cramped in the very narrowest niche,
Above the poor, and below the rich,
Was ever a worse condition?

MORAL.

Because you flourish in worldly affairs,
Don't be haughty, and put on airs,
With insolent pride of station!
Don't be proud, and turn up your nose
At poorer people in plainer clo'es,
But learn, for the sake of your soul's repose,
That wealth 's a bubble, that comes, — and goes!
And that all Proud Flesh, wherever it grows,
Is subject to irritation!

THE MASQUERADE.

Ἁρφασις, ἥτ' ἔκλεψε νόον πύκα περ φρονεόντων.
HOM. Il. xiv. 217.

I.

COUNT FELIX was a man of worth
By Fashion's strictest definition,
For he had money, manners, birth,
And that most slippery thing on earth
Which social critics call position.

II.

And yet the Count was seldom gay;
The rich and noble have their crosses;
And he — as he was wont to say —
Had seen some trouble in his day,
And met with several serious losses.

III.

Among the rest, he lost his wife,
A very model of a woman,
With every needed virtue rife
To lead a spouse a happy life, —
Such wives (in France) are not uncommon.

IV.

The lady died, and left him sad
And lone, to mourn the best of spouses:
She left him also — let me add —
One child, and all the wealth she had, —
The rent of half a dozen houses.

V.

I cannot tarry to discuss
The weeping husband's desolation;
Upon her tomb he wrote it thus: —
"FELIX *infelicissimus!*"
In very touching ostentation.

VI.

Indeed, the Count's behavior earned
The plaudits of his strict confessor;
His weeds of woe had fairly turned
From black to brown, ere he had learned
To think about his wife's successor.

VII.

And then, indeed, 't was but a thought;
A sort of sentimental dreaming,
That came at times, and came — to naught,
With all the plans so nicely wrought
By matrons skilled in marriage-scheming.

VIII.

At last when many years had fled,
And Father Time, the great physician,
Had soothed his sorrow for the dead,
Count Felix took it in his head
To change his wearisome condition.

IX.

You think, perhaps, 't was quickly done;
The Count was still a man of fashion;
Wealth, title, talents, all in one,
Were eloquence to win a nun,
If nuns could feel a worldly passion.

X.

And yet the Count might well despond
Of tying soon the silken tether;
Wise, witty, handsome, faithful, fond,
And twenty — not a year beyond—
Are charming, — when they come together!

XI.

But more than that, the man required
A wife to share his whims and fancies;
Admire alone what *he* admired;
Desire, of course, as *he* desired,
And show it in her very glances.

XII.

Long, long the would-be wooer tried
To find his precious *ultimatum*, —
All earthly charms in one fair bride;
But still in vain he sought and sighed;
He couldn't manage to get at 'em.

XIII.

In sooth, the Count was one of those
Who, seeking something superhuman,
Find not the angel they would choose,
And — what is more unlucky — lose
Their chance to wed a charming woman.

XIV.

The best-matched doves in Hymen's cage
Were paired in youth's romantic season;
Laugh as you will at passion's rage,
The most unreasonable age
Is what is called the age of reason.

XV.

In love-affairs, we all have seen,
The heart is oft the best adviser;
The gray might well consult the "green,"
Cool sixty learn of rash sixteen,
And go away a deal the wiser.

XVI.

The Count's high hopes began to fade;
His plans were not at all advancing;
When, lo! — one day his *valet* made
Some mention of a masquerade, —
"I 'll go," said he, — "and see the dancing."

XVII.

"'T will serve my spirits to arouse;
And, faith! I 'm getting melancholy.
'T is not the place to seek a spouse,
Where people go to *break* their vows, —
But then 't will be extremely jolly!"

XVIII.

Count Felix found the crowd immense,
And, had he been a *censor morum*,
He might have said, without offence,
"Got up regardless of expense,
And some — regardless of decorum."

XIX.

"Faith! — all the world is here to-night!"
"Nay," said a merry friend demurely,
"Not quite the whole, — *pardon!* — not quite;
Le Demi-Monde were nearer right,
And no exaggeration, surely!"

XX.

The revelry ('t was just begun)
A stoic might have found diverting;
That is, of course, if he was one
Who liked to see a bit of fun,
And fancied *persiflage* and flirting.

XXI.

But who can paint that giddy maze?
Go find the lucky man who handles
A brush to catch, on gala-days,
The whirling, shooting, flashing rays
Of Catherine-wheels and Roman candles!

XXII.

All sorts of masks that e'er were seen;
Fantastic, comic, and satanic;
Dukes, dwarfs, and "Highnesses" (Serene),
And (that 's of course) the Cyprian Queen,
In gauzes few and diaphanic.

XXIII.

Lean Carmelites, fat Capuchins,
Giants half human and half bestial;
Kings, Queens, Magicians, Harlequins,
Greeks, Tartars, Turks, and Mandarins
More diabolic than "Celestial."

XXIV.

Fair Scripture dames, — Naomi, Ruth,
And Hagar, looking quite demented;
The Virtues (all — excepting Truth)
And Magdalens, who were in sooth
Just half of what they represented!

XXV.

Fates, Furies, Fairies, — all the best
And worst of Fancy's weird creation;
Psyche and Cupid (demi-dressed)
With several Vestals — by request,
And solely for that one occasion.

XXVI.

And one, among the motley brood,
He saw, who shunned the wanton dances;
A sort of demi-nun, who stood
In ringlets flashing from a hood,
And seemed to seek our hero's glances.

XXVII.

The Count, delighted with her air,
Drew near, the better to behold her;
Her form was slight, her skin was fair,
And maidenhood, you well might swear,
Breathed from the dimples in her shoulder.

XXVIII.

He spoke; she answered with a grace
That showed the girl no vulgar heiress;
And, — if the features one may trace
In voices, — hers betrayed a face
The finest to be found in Paris!

XXIX.

And then such wit! — in repartee
She shone without the least endeavor;
A beauty and a *bel-esprit!*
A scholar, too, — 't was plain to see.
Who ever saw a girl so clever?

XXX.

Her taste he ventured to explore
In books, the graver and the lighter,
And mentioned authors by the score;
Mon Dieu! in every sort of lore
She always chose his favorite writer!

XXXI.

She loved the poets; but confessed
Racine beat all the others hollow;
At least, she thought his *style* the best —
(Racine! *his* literary test!
Racine! his *Maximus Apollo!*)

XXXII.

Whatever topic he might name,
Their minds were strangely sympathetic;
Of courtship, marriage, fashion, fame,
Their views and feelings were the same, —
"*Parbleu!*" he cried, "it looks prophetic!"

XXXIII.

"Come, let us seek an ampler space;
This heated room — I can't abide it!
That mask, I 'm sure, is out of place,
And hides the fairest, sweetest face —"
Said she, "I wear the mask to hide it!"

XXXIV.

The answer was extremely pat,
And gave the Count a deal of pleasure:
"*C'est vrai!* I did not think of that!
Come, let us go where we can chat
And eat (I 'm hungry) at our leisure."

XXXV.

"I 'm hungry too!" she said, — and went,
Without the least attempt to cozen, —
Like ladies who refuse, relent,
Debate, oppose, and then consent
To — eat enough for half a dozen!

XXXVI.

And so they sat them down to dine,
Solus cum sola, gay and merry;
The Count inquires the sort of wine
To which his charmer may incline;
Ah! quelle merveille! she answers, "Sherry!"

XXXVII.

What will she eat? She takes the *carte*,
And notes the viands that she wishes;
"*Pardon, Monsieur!* what makes you start?"

As if she knew his tastes by heart,
The lady named his favorite dishes!

XXXVIII.

Was e'er such sympathy before?
The Count was really half demented;
He kissed her hand, and roundly swore
He loved her perfectly! — and, more, —
He 'd wed her — if the gods consented!

XXXIX.

"Monsieur is very kind," she said,
"His love so lavishly bestowing
On one who never thought to wed, —
And least of all" — she raised her head —
"'T is late, Sir Knight, I must be going!"

XL.

Count Felix sighed, — and while he drew
Her shawl about her, at his leisure,
"What street?" he asked; "my cab is due."
"No, no!" she said, "*I go with you!*
That is — if it may be your pleasure."

XLI.

Of course, there 's little need to say
The Count delighted in her capture;
Away he drove, and all the way
He murmured, "*Quelle félicité!*"
In very ecstasy of rapture!

XLII.

Arrived at home — just where a fount
Shot forth a jet of lucent water —
He helped the lady to dismount;
She drops her mask, and lo! the Count
Sees — *Dieu de ciel!* — his only daughter!

XLIII.

"Good night!" she said, — "I 'm very well,
Although you thought my health was fading;
Be good — and I will never tell
('T was funny though) of what befell
When you and I went masquerading!"

MY FAMILIAR.

"Ecce iterum Crispinus!"

I.

AGAIN I hear that creaking step! —
He 's rapping at the door! —
Too well I know the boding sound
That ushers in a bore.
I do not tremble when I meet
The stoutest of my foes,
But Heaven defend me from the friend
Who comes — but never goes!

II.

He drops into my easy-chair,
And asks about the news;
He peers into my manuscript,
And gives his candid views;
He tells me where he likes the line,
And where he 's forced to grieve;
He takes the strangest liberties, —
But never takes his leave!

III.

He reads my daily paper through
Before I 've seen a word;
He scans the lyric (that I wrote)
And thinks it quite absurd;
He calmly smokes my last cigar,
And coolly asks for more;

He opens everything he sees —
Except the entry door!

IV.

He talks about his fragile health,
And tells me of the pains
He suffers from a score of ills
Of which he ne'er complains;
And how he struggled once with death
To keep the fiend at bay;
On themes like those away he goes, —
But never goes away!

V.

He tells me of the carping words
Some shallow critic wrote;
And every precious paragraph
Familiarly can quote;
He thinks the writer did me wrong;
He 'd like to run him through!
He says a thousand pleasant things, —
But never says, "Adieu!"

VI.

Whene'er he comes, — that dreadful man, —
Disguise it as I may,
I know that, like an Autumn rain,
He 'll last throughout the day.
In vain I speak of urgent tasks;
In vain I scowl and pout;
A frown is no extinguisher, —
It does not put him out!

VII.

I mean to take the knocker off,
Put crape upon the door,
Or hint to John that I am gone
To stay a month or more.
I do not tremble when I meet
The stoutest of my foes,
But Heaven defend me from the friend
Who never, never goes!

LOVE AND LAW.

A LEGEND OF BOSTON.

I.

JACK NEWMAN was in love; a common case
With boys just verging upon manhood's prime,
When every damsel with a pretty face
Seems some bright creature from a purer clime,
Sent by the gods to bless a country town, —
A pink-checked angel in a muslin gown.

II.

Jack was in love; and also much in doubt
(As thoughtful lovers oft have been before)
If it were better to be in or out.
Such pain alloyed his bliss. On reason's score,
Perhaps 't is equally a sin to get
Too deep in love, in liquor, or in debt.

III.

The lady of his love, Miss Mary Blank
(I call her so to hide her real name),
Was fair and twenty, and in social rank —
That is, in riches — much above her flame;
The daughter of a person who had tin
Already won; while Jack had his to win.

IV.

Her father was a lawyer; rather rusty
In legal lore, but one who well had striven

In former days to swell his "*res angustæ*"
To broad possessions; and, in short, had thriven
Bravely in his vocation; though, the fact is,
More by his "practices" ('t was said) than practice!

V.

A famous man was Blank for sound advice
In doubtful cases; for example, where
The point in question is extremely nice,
And turns upon the section of a hair;
Or where — which seems a very common pother —
Justice looks one way, and the Law another.

VI.

Great was his skill to make or mar a plot:
To prop, at need, a rotten reputation,
Or undermine a good one; he had got
By heart the subtle science of evasion,
And knew the useful art to pick a flaw
Through which a rascal might escape the law.

VII.

Jack was his pupil; and 't is rather queer
So shrewd a counsellor did not discover,
With all his cunning both of eye and ear,
That this same pupil was his daughter's lover;
And — what would much have shocked his legal tutor —
Was even now the girl's accepted suitor!

VIII.

Fearing a *non-suit*, if the lawyer knew
The case too soon, Jack kept it to himself;
And, stranger still, the lady kept it too;
For well he knew the father's pride of pelf,
Should e'en a bare suspicion cross his mind,
Would soon abate the action they designed.

IX.

For Jack was impecunious; and Blank
Had small regard for people who were poor;
Riches to him were beauty, grace, and rank:
In short, the man was one of many more
Who worship money-bags and those who own 'em,
And think a handsome sum the *summum bonum*.

X.

I 'm fond of civil words, and do not wish
To be satirical; but none despise
The poor so truly as the *nouveaux riche;*
And here, no doubt, the real reason lies,
That being over-proud of what they are,
They 're naturally ashamed of what they were.

XI.

Certain to meet the father's cold negation,
Jack dare not ask him for his daughter's hand.
What should he do? 'T was surely an occasion
For all the wit a lover might command;
At last he chose (it seemed his only hope)
That final card of Cupid, — to elope!

XII.

A pretty plan to please a penny-a-liner;
But far less pleasant for the leading factor,
Should the fair maiden chance to be a *minor*
(Whom the law reckons an unwilling actor);
And here Jack found a rather sad obstruction, —
He might be caught and punished for abduction.

XIII.

What could he do? Well, — here is what he did:
As a "moot-case" to Lawyer Blank he told
The whole affair, save that the names were hid.
I can't help thinking it was rather bold,
But Love is partial to heroic schemes,
And often proves much wiser than he seems.

XIV.

"The thing is safe enough, with proper care,"
Observed the lawyer, smiling.
"Here 's your course: —
Just let the lady manage the affair
Throughout; *Videlicet*, she gets the horse,
And mounts him, unassisted, *first*; but mind,
The woman sits before, and you, behind!

XV.

"Then who is the abductor? — Just suppose
A court and jury looking at the case;
What ground of action do the facts disclose?
They find a horse, — two riders, — and a race, —
And you 'Not Guilty'; for 't is clearly true
The dashing damsel ran away with you!"

XVI.

* * * * *

XVII.

These social sins are often rather grave;
I give such deeds no countenance of mine;
Nor can I say the father e'er forgave;
But that was surely a propitious "sign,"
On which (in after years) the words I saw
Were, "BLANK AND NEWMAN, COUNSELLORS AT LAW!"

RHYME OF THE RAIL.

SINGING through the forests,
Rattling over ridges,
Shooting under arches,
Rumbling over bridges,
Whizzing through the mountains,
Buzzing o'er the vale, —

Bless me! this is pleasant,
  Riding on the Rail!

Men of different "stations"
  In the eye of Fame
Here are very quickly
  Coming to the same.
High and lowly people,
  Birds of every feather,
On a common level
  Travelling together!

Gentleman in shorts,
  Looming very tall;
Gentleman at large,
  Talking very small;
Gentleman in tights,
  With a loose-ish mien;
Gentleman in gray,
  Looking rather green.

Gentleman quite old,
  Asking for the news;
Gentleman in black,
  In a fit of blues;
Gentleman in claret,
  Sober as a vicar;
Gentleman in Tweed,
  Dreadfully in liquor!

Stranger on the right,
  Looking very sunny,
Obviously reading
  Something rather funny.
Now the smiles are thicker,
  Wonder what they mean?
Faith, he 's got the KNICKER-
  BOCKER Magazine!

Stranger on the left,
  Closing up his peepers;
Now he snores amain,
  Like the Seven Sleepers;
At his feet a volume
  Gives the explanation,
How the man grew stupid
  From "Association"!

Ancient maiden lady
  Anxiously remarks,
That there must be peril
  'Mong so many sparks!
Roguish-looking fellow,
  Turning to the stranger,
Says it 's his opinion
  She is out of danger!

Woman with her baby,
  Sitting *vis-à-vis*;
Baby keeps a squalling;
  Woman looks at me;
Asks about the distance,
  Says it 's tiresome talking,
Noises of the cars
  Are so very shocking!

Market-woman careful
  Of the precious casket,
Knowing eggs are eggs,
  Tightly holds her basket;
Feeling that a smash,
  If it came, would surely
Send her eggs to pot
  Rather prematurely!

Singing through the forests,
  Rattling over ridges,
Shooting under arches,
  Rumbling over bridges,
Whizzing through the mountains,
  Buzzing o'er the vale;
Bless me! this is pleasant,
  Riding on the Rail!

THE BRIEFLESS BARRISTER.

A BALLAD.

AN Attorney was taking a turn,
  In shabby habiliments drest;
His coat it was shockingly worn,
  And the rust had invested his vest.

His breeches had suffered a breach,
  His linen and worsted were worse;

He had scarce a whole crown in his hat,
And not half a crown in his purse.

And thus as he wandered along,
A cheerless and comfortless elf,
He sought for relief in a song,
Or complainingly talked to himself: —

"Unfortunate man that I am!
I've never a client but grief:
The case is, I've no case at all,
And in brief, I've ne'er had a brief!

"I've waited and waited in vain,
Expecting an 'opening' to find,
Where an honest young lawyer might gain
Some reward for toil of his mind.

"'T is not that I'm wanting in law,
Or lack an intelligent face,
That others have cases to plead,
While I have to plead for a case.

"O, how can a modest young man
E'er hope for the smallest progression, —
The profession's already so full
Of lawyers so full of profession!"

While thus he was strolling around,
His eye accidentally fell
On a very deep hole in the ground,
And he sighed to himself, "It is well!"

To curb his emotions, he sat
On the curbstone the space of a minute,
Then cried, "Here's an opening at last!"
And in less than a jiffy was in it!

Next morning twelve citizens came
('T was the coroner bade them attend),
To the end that it might be determined
How the man had determined his end!

"The man was a lawyer, I hear,"
Quoth the foreman who sat on the corse.
"A lawyer? Alas!" said another,
"Undoubtedly died of remorse!"

A third said, "He knew the deceased,
An attorney well versed in the laws,
And as to the cause of his death,
'T was no doubt for the want of a cause."

The jury decided at length,
After solemnly weighing the matter,
That the lawyer was drown*d*ed, because
He could not keep his head above water!

LITTLE JERRY, THE MILLER.*

A BALLAD.

BENEATH the hill you may see the mill
Of wasting wood and crumbling stone;

* Perhaps it may add a trifle to the interest of this ballad to know that the description, both of the man and the mill, is quite true. "Little Jerry" — a diminutive Frenchman of remarkable strength, wit, and good-nature — was for many years my father's miller in Highgate, Vermont. His surname was written "Goodheart" in the mill-books; but he often told me that our English translation was quite too weak, as the real name was spelled "*Fortboncœur.*"

The wheel is dripping and clattering still,
But JERRY, the miller, is dead and gone.

Year after year, early and late,
Alike in summer and winter weather,
He pecked the stones and calked the gate,
And mill and miller grew old together.

"Little Jerry!" — 't was all the same, —
They loved him well who called him so;
And whether he 'd ever another name,
Nobody ever seemed to know.

'T was, "Little Jerry, come grind my rye";
And, "Little Jerry, come grind my wheat";
And "Little Jerry" was still the cry,
From matron bold and maiden sweet.

'T was "Little Jerry" on every tongue,
And so the simple truth was told;
For Jerry was little when he was young,
And Jerry was little when he was old.

But what in size he chanced to lack,
That Jerry made up in being strong;
I 've seen a sack upon his back
As thick as the miller, and quite as long.

Always busy, and always merry,
Always doing his very best,
A notable wag was Little Jerry,
Who uttered well his standing jest.

How Jerry lived is known to fame,
But how he died there 's none may know;
One autumn day the rumor came,
"The brook and Jerry are very low."

And then 't was whispered, mournfully,
The leech had come, and he was dead;
And all the neighbors flocked to see;
"Poor little Jerry!" was all they said.

They laid him in his earthy bed, —
His miller's coat his only shroud;
"Dust to dust," the parson said,
And all the people wept aloud.

For he had shunned the deadly sin,
And not a grain of over-toll
Had ever dropped into his bin,
To weigh upon his parting soul.

Beneath the hill there stands the mill,
Of wasting wood and crumbling stone;
The wheel is dripping and clattering still,
But JERRY, the miller, is dead and gone.

HOW CYRUS LAID THE CABLE.

A BALLAD.

COME, listen all unto my song;
It is no silly fable;
'T is all about the mighty cord
They call the Atlantic Cable.

Bold Cyrus Field he said, says he,
I have a pretty notion
That I can run a telegraph
Across the Atlantic Ocean.

Then all the people laughed, and said,
They 'd like to see him do it;
He might get half-seas-over, but
He never could go through it;

To carry out his foolish plan
He never would be able;
He might as well go hang himself
With his Atlantic Cable.

But Cyrus was a valiant man,
A fellow of decision;
And heeded not their mocking words,
Their laughter and derision.

Twice did his bravest efforts fail,
And yet his mind was stable;
He wa' n't the man to break his heart
Because he broke his cable.

"Once more, my gallant boys!" he cried;
"*Three times!* — you know the fable, —
(I 'll make it *thirty*," muttered he,
"But I will lay the cable!")

Once more they tried, — hurrah! hurrah!
What means this great commotion?
The Lord be praised! the cable 's laid
Across the Atlantic Ocean!

Loud ring the bells, — for, flashing through
Six hundred leagues of water,
Old Mother England's benison
Salutes her eldest daughter!

O'er all the land the tidings speed,
And soon, in every nation,
They 'll hear about the cable with
Profoundest admiration!

Now, long live President and Queen;
And long live gallant Cyrus;
And may his courage, faith, and zeal
With emulation fire us;

And may we honor evermore
The manly, bold, and stable;
And tell our sons, to make them brave,
How Cyrus laid the cable!

WHAT HAS BECOME OF THE GODS.

Full often I had heard it said,
As something quite uncontroverted,
"The gods and goddesses are dead,
And high Olympus is deserted":
And so, while thinking of the gods,
I made, one night, an exploration,
(In fact or fancy, — where 's the odds?)
To get authentic information.

I found — to make a true report,
As if I were a sworn committee —
They all had left the upper court,
And settled in Manhattan city;
Where now they live, as best they may,
Quite unsuspected of their neighbors,
And in a humbler sort of way,
Repeat their old Olympic labors.

In human frames, for safe disguise,
They come and go through wooden portals,

And to the keen Detective's eyes
Seem nothing more than common mortals;
For mortal-like they 're clad and fed,
And, still to blind the sharp inspector,
Eat, for ambrosia, baker's bread,
And tipple — everything but nectar.

Great Jove, who wore the kingly crown,
And used to make Olympus rattle,
As if the sky was coming down,
Or all the Titans were in battle, —
Is now a sorry playhouse wight,
Content to make the groundlings wonder,
And earn some shillings every night,
By coining cheap theatric thunder.

Apollo, who in better times
Was poet-laureate of th' Elysians,
And, adding medicine to rhymes,
Was chief among the court physicians,
Now cures disease of every grade, —
Lucina's cares and *Cupid's* curses, —
And, still to ply his double trade,
Bepuffs his pills in doggerel verses!

Minerva, famous in her day
For wit and war, — though often shocking
The gods by overmuch display
Of what they called her azure stocking, —
Now deals in books of ancient kind
(Where Learning soars and Fancy grovels),
And, to indulge her warlike mind,
Writes very sanguinary novels.

And Venus, who on Ida's seat
In myrtle-groves her charms paraded,
Displays her beauty in the street,
And seems, indeed, a little faded;
She 's dealing in the clothing-line
(If at her word you choose to take her),
In *Something Square* you read the sign: —
"MISS CYTHEREA, MANTUA-MAKER."

Mars figures still as god of war,
But not with spear and iron hanger,
Erect upon the ponderous car
That rolled along with fearful clangor;
Ah! no; of sword and spear bereft,
He stands beside his bottle-holder,
And plumps his *right*, and plants his *left*,
And strikes directly from the shoulder.

And Bacchus, reared among the vines
That flourished in the fields Elysian,
And ruddy with the rarest wines
That ever flashed upon the vision, —
A licensed liquor-dealer now,
Sits pale and thin from overdosing
With whisky, made — the deuce knows how,
And brandy of his own composing.

And cunning Mercury, — what d' ye think
Is now the nimble rogue's condition?

Of course 't was but a step, to sink
From *Peter Funk* to politician;
Though now he neither steals nor robs,
But just secures a friend's election,
And lives and thrives on little jobs
Connected with the Street Inspection.

Thus all the gods, in deep disguise,
Go in and out of wooden portals,
And, to the sharpest human eyes,
Seem nothing more than common mortals.
And so they live, as best they may,
Quite unsuspected of their neighbors,
And, in a humbler sort of way,
Repeat their old Olympic labors.

THE COLD-WATER MAN.

A BALLAD.

It was an honest fisherman,
I knew him passing well, —
And he lived by a little pond,
Within a little dell.

A grave and quiet man was he,
Who loved his hook and rod, —
So even ran his line of life,
His neighbors thought it odd.

For science and for books, he said
He never had a wish, —
No school to him was worth a fig,
Except a school of fish.

He ne'er aspired to rank or wealth,
Nor cared about a name, —
For though much famed for fish was he,
He never fished for fame.

Let others bend their necks at sight
Of Fashion's gilded wheels,
He ne'er had learned the art to "bob"
For anything but eels.

A cunning fisherman was he,
His angles all were right;
The smallest nibble at his bait
Was sure to prove "a bite"!

All day this fisherman would sit
Upon an ancient log,
And gaze into the water, like
Some sedentary frog;

With all the seeming innocence,
And that unconscious look,
That other people often wear
When they intend to "hook"!

To charm the fish he never spoke, —
Although his voice was fine,
He found the most convenient way
Was just to drop a line.

And many a gudgeon of the pond,
If they could speak to-day,
Would own, with grief, this angler had
A mighty taking way.

Alas! one day this fisherman
Had taken too much grog,
And being but a landsman, too,
He could n't keep the log.

'T was all in vain with might and main
He strove to reach the shore;
Down — down he went, to feed the fish
He 'd baited oft before.

The jury gave their verdict that
'T was nothing else but gin
Had caused the fisherman to be
So sadly taken in;

Though one stood out upon a whim,
And said the angler's slaughter,
To be exact about the fact,
Was, clearly, gin-and-*water!*

The moral of this mournful tale,
To all is plain and clear, —
That drinking habits bring a man
Too often to his bier;

And he who scorns to "take the pledge,"
And keep the promise fast,
May be, in spite of fate, a *stiff*
Cold-water man at last!

COMIC MISERIES.

I.

My dear young friend, whose shining wit
Sets all the room ablaze,
Don't think yourself "a happy dog,"
For all your merry ways;
But learn to wear a sober phiz,
Be stupid, if you can,
It's such a very serious thing
To be a funny man!

II.

You're at an evening party, with
A group of pleasant folks, —
You venture quietly to crack
The least of little jokes:
A lady does n't catch the point,
And begs you to explain, —
Alas for one who drops a jest
And takes it up again!

III.

You're talking deep philosophy
With very special force,
To edify a clergyman
With suitable discourse:
You think you've got him, — when he calls
A friend across the way,
And begs you'll say that funny thing
You said the other day!

IV.

You drop a pretty *jeu-de-mot*
Into a neighbor's ears,
Who likes to give you credit for
The clever thing he hears,
And so he hawks your jest about,
The old, authentic one,
Just breaking off the point of it,
And leaving out the pun!

V.

By sudden change in politics,
Or sadder change in Polly,
You lose your love, or loaves, and fall
A prey to melancholy,
While everybody marvels why
Your mirth is under ban,
They think your very grief "a joke,"
You're such a funny man!

VI.

You follow up a stylish card
That bids you come and dine,
And bring along your freshest wit
(To pay for musty wine);
You're looking very dismal, when
My lady bounces in,
And wonders what you're thinking of,
And why you don't begin!

VII.

You're telling to a knot of friends
A fancy-tale of woes
That cloud your matrimonial sky,
And banish all repose, —
A solemn lady overhears
The story of your strife,

And tells the town the pleasant news: —
You quarrel with your wife!

VIII.

My dear young friend, whose shining wit
Sets all the room ablaze,
Don't think yourself "a happy dog,"
For all your merry ways;
But learn to wear a sober phiz,
Be stupid, if you can,
It 's such a very serious thing
To be a funny man!

A CONNUBIAL ECLOGUE.

"Arcades ambo,
Et cantare pares et respondere parati."
VIRGIL

HE.

MUCH lately have I thought, my darling wife,
Some simple rules might make our wedded life
As pleasant always as a morn in May;
I merely name it, — what does Molly say?

SHE.

Agreed: your plan I heartily approve;
Rules would be nice, — but who shall make them, love?
Nay, do not speak! — let this the bargain be,
One shall be made by you, and one by me,
Till all are done —

HE.

— Your plan is surely fair,
In such a work 't is fitting we should share;
And now — although it matters not a pin —
If you have no objection, I 'll begin.

SHE.

Proceed! In making laws I 'm little versed;
And as to words, I do not mind the first;
I only claim — and hold the treasure fast —
My sex's sacred privilege, the *last!*

HE.

With all my heart. Well, dearest, to begin: —
When by our cheerful hearth our friends drop in,
And I am talking in my brilliant style
(The rest with rapture listening the while)
About the war, — or anything, in short,
That you 're aware is my especial *forte*, —
Pray don't get up a circle of your own,
And talk of — bonnets, in an undertone!

SHE.

That 's Number One; I 'll mind it well, if you
Will do as much, my dear, by Number Two:
When we attend a party or a ball,
Don't leave your Molly standing by the wall,
The helpless victim of the dreariest bore
That ever walked upon a parlor-floor,
While you — oblivious of your spouse's doom —
Flirt with the girls, — the gayest in the room!

HE.

When I (although the busiest man alive)
Have snatched an hour to take a pleasant drive,
And say, "Remember, at precisely four
You 'll find the carriage ready at the door,"
Don't keep me waiting half an hour or so,
And then declare, "The clock must be too slow!"

SHE.

When you (such things have happened now and then)
Go to the Club with, "I 'll be back at ten,"
And stay till two o'clock, you need n't say,
"I really was the first to come away;
'T is very strange how swift the time has passed:
I 'm sure, my dear, the clock must be too *fast!*"

HE.

There — that will do; what else remains to say
We may consider at a future day;
I 'm getting sleepy — and — if you have done —

SHE.

Not I! — this making rules is precious fun;
Now here 's another: — When you paint to me
"That charming woman" you are sure to see,
Don't — when you praise the virtues she has got —
Name only those you think your wife has not!
And here 's a rule I hope you won't forget,
The most important I have mentioned yet, —
Pray mind it well: — Whenever you incline
To bring your queer companions home to dine,
Suppose, my dear, — Good Gracious! he 's asleep!
Ah! well, — 't is lucky good advice will keep;
And he shall have it, or, upon my life,
I 've not the proper spirit of a wife!

SOME PENCIL-PICTURES:

TAKEN AT SARATOGA.

I.

YOUR novel-writers make their ladies tall;
I mean their heroines; as if, indeed,
It were a fatal failing to be small.
In this, I own, we are not well agreed, —
I like a little woman, if she 's pretty,
Modest and clever, sensible and witty.

II.

And such is she who sits beside me; fair
As her deportment; mine is not the pen
To paint the glory of her Saxon hair,
And eyes of heavenly azure! There are men
Who doat on raven tresses, and are fond
Of dark complexions, — I adore a *blonde!*

III.

There sits a woman of another type;
Superb in figure and of stately size;
An Amazonian beauty round and ripe
As Cytherea, — with delicious eyes
That laugh or languish with a shifting hue
Somewhat between a hazel and a blue.

IV.

Across the room — to please a daintier taste —
A slender damsel flits with fairy tread;
A lover's hand might span her little waist,
If so inclined, — that is, if they were wed.
Some youths admire those fragile forms, I've heard;
I never saw the *man*, upon my word!

V.

But styles of person, though they please me more,
(As Nature's work) excite my wonder less
Than all my curious vision may explore
In moods and manners, equipage and dress;
The last alone were theme enough, indeed,
For more than I could write, or you would read.

VI.

Swift satirized mankind with little ruth,
And womankind as well; but we must own
His words of censure oft are very truth, —
For instance, where the satirist has shown
How — thankless for the gifts which they have got —
All strive to show the talents they — have not!

VII.

Thus (it is written) Frederick the Great
Cared little for the battles he had fought,
But listened eagerly and all-elate
To hear a courtier praise the style and thought
That graced his Sonnets; though, in fact, his verse
(I've tried to read it) could n't well be worse!

VIII.

The like absurd ambition you may note
In fashionable women. Look you there!
Observe an arm which all (but she) must vote
Extremely ugly; so she keeps it bare
(Lest so much beauty should escape the light)
From wrist to shoulder, morning, noon, and night!

IX.

Observe again (the girl who stands alone)
How Pride reveals what Prudence would suppress;
A mere anatomy of skin-and-bone, —
She wears, perversely, a *décolleté* dress!
Those tawny angles seek no friendly screen,
But court the day, and glory to be seen!

X.

O Robert Burns! if such a thing might be,
That all by ignorance or folly blind,
For once should "see themselves as others see,"
(As thou didst pray for hapless human kind,)
What startled crowds would madly rush to hide
The dearest objects of their fondest pride!

BOYS.

"THE proper study of mankind is man," —
The most perplexing one, no doubt, is woman,
The subtlest study that the mind can scan,
Of all deep problems, heavenly or human!

But of all studies in the round of learning,
From nature's marvels down to human toys,
To minds well fitted for acute discerning,
The very queerest one is that of boys!

If to ask questions that would puzzle Plato,
And all the schoolmen of the Middle Age, —
If to make precepts worthy of old Cato,
Be deemed philosophy, your boy 's a sage!

If the possession of a teeming fancy,
(Although, forsooth, the younker does n't know it,)
Which he can use in rarest necromancy,
Be thought poetical, your boy 's a poet!

If a strong will and most courageous bearing,
If to be cruel as the Roman Nero;
If all that 's chivalrous, and all that 's daring,
Can make a hero, then the boy 's a hero!

But changing soon with his increasing stature,
The boy is lost in manhood's riper age,
And with him goes his former triple nature, —
No longer Poet, Hero, now, nor Sage!

THE SUPERFLUOUS MAN.

"It is ascertained by inspection of the registers of many countries, that the uniform proportion of male to female births is as 21 to 20: accordingly, in respect to marriage, every 21st man is naturally superfluous." — TREATISE ON POPULATION.

I LONG have been puzzled to guess,
And so I have frequently said,
What the reason could really be
That I never have happened to wed;
But now it is perfectly clear,
I am under a natural ban;
The girls are already assigned, —
And I 'm a superfluous man!

Those clever statistical chaps
Declare the numerical run
Of women and men in the world,
Is Twenty to Twenty-and-one;
And hence in the pairing, you see,
Since wooing and wedding began,

For every connubial score,
They 've got a superfluous man!

By twenties and twenties they go,
And giddily rush to their fate,
For none of the number, of course,
Can fail of a conjugal mate;
But while they are yielding in scores
To Nature's inflexible plan,
There 's never a woman for me, —
For I 'm a superfluous man!

It is n't that I am a churl,
To solitude over-inclined;
It is n't that I am at fault
In morals or manners or mind;
Then what is the reason, you ask,
I 'm still with the bachelor-clan?
I merely was numbered amiss, —
And I 'm a superfluous man!

It is n't that I am in want
Of personal beauty or grace,
For many a man with a wife
Is uglier far in the face;
Indeed, among elegant men
I fancy myself in the van;
But what is the value of that,
When I 'm a superfluous man?

Although I am fond of the girls,
For aught I could ever discern
The tender emotion I feel
Is one that they never return;
'T is idle to quarrel with fate,
For, struggle as hard as I can,
They 're mated already, you know, —
And I 'm a superfluous man!

No wonder I grumble at times,
With women so pretty and plenty,
To know that I never was born
To figure as one of the Twenty;
But yet, when the average lot
With critical vision I scan,
I think it may be for the best
That I 'm a superfluous man!

TOUJOURS LES FEMMES.

I THINK it was a Persian king
Who used to say, that evermore
In human life each evil thing
Comes of the sex that men adore;
In brief, that nothing e'er befell
To harm or grieve our hapless race,
But, if you probe the matter well,
You 'll find a woman in the case!

And then the curious tale is told
How, when upon a certain night
A climbing youngster lost his hold,
And, falling from a ladder's height,
Was found, alas! next morning dead,
His Majesty, with solemn face,
As was his wont, demurely said,
"Pray, who 's the woman in the case?"

And how a lady of his court,
Who deemed the royal whim absurd,
Rebuked him, while she made report
Of the mischance that late occurred;
Whereat the king replied in glee,
"I 've heard the story, please your Grace,
And all the witnesses agree
There was a woman in the case!

"The truth, your Ladyship, is this
(Nor is it marvellous at all),
The chap was climbing for a kiss,
And got, instead, a fatal fall.
Whene'er a man — as I have said —
Falls from a ladder, or from grace,
Or breaks his faith, or breaks his head,
There is a woman in the case!"

For such a churlish, carping creed
As that his Majesty professed,
I hold him of unkingly breed, —
Unless, in sooth, he spoke in jest.
To me, few things have come to pass
Of good event, but I can trace, —
Thanks to the matron or the lass, —
Somewhere, a woman in the case.

Yet once, while gayly strolling where
A vast Museum still displays
Its varied wealth of strange and rare,
To charm, or to repel, the gaze, —
I — to a lady (who denied
The creed by laughing in my face) —
Took up, for once, the Persian's side
About a woman in the case.

Discoursing thus, we came upon
A grim Egyptian mummy — dead
Some centuries since. 'T is Pharaoh's son,
Perhaps; who knows?" the lady said.
No! on the black sarcophagus
A female name I stooped to trace.
Toujours les femmes! 'T is ever thus, —
There was a woman in the *case!*

GIRLHOOD.

With rosy cheeks, and merry-dancing curls,
And eyes of tender light,
O, very beautiful are little girls,
And goodly to the sight!

Here comes a group to seek my lonely bower,
Ere waning Autumn dies:
How like the dew-drops on a drooping flower,
Are smiles from gentle eyes!

What beaming gladness lights each fairy face
The while the elves advance,
Now speeding swiftly in a gleesom race,
Now whirling in a dance!

What heavenly pleasure o'er the spirit rolls,
When all the air along
Floats the sweet music of untainted souls,
In bright, unsullied song!

The sacred nymphs that guard this sylvan ground
May sport unseen with these,
And joy to hear their ringing laugh resound
Among the clustering trees!

With rosy cheeks, and merry-dancing curls,
And eyes of tender light,
O, very beautiful are little girls,
And goodly to the sight!

THE COCKNEY.

It was in my foreign travel,
At a famous Flemish inn,
That I met a stoutish person
With a very ruddy skin;
And his hair was something sandy,
And was done in knotty curls,
And was parted in the middle,
In the manner of a girl's.

He was clad in checkered trousers,
And his coat was of a sort

To suggest a scanty pattern,
It was bobbed so very short;
And his cap was very little,
Such as soldiers often use;
And he wore a pair of gaiters,
And extremely heavy shoes.

I addressed the man in English,
And he answered in the same,
Though he spoke it in a fashion
That I thought a little lame;
For the aspirate was missing
Where the letter should have been,
But where'er it was n't wanted,
He was sure to put it in!

When I spoke with admiration
Of St. Peter's mighty dome,
He remarked: "'T is really nothing
To the sights we 'ave at 'ome!"
And declared upon his honor, —
Though, of course, 't was very queer, —
That he doubted if the Romans
'Ad the *h*art of making beer!

When I named the Colosseum,
He observed, "'T is very fair;
I mean, ye know, it *would* be,
If they 'd put it in repair;
But what progress or *h*improvement
Can those curst *H*italians 'ope
While they 're *h*under the dominion
Of that blasted muff, the Pope?"

Then we talked of other countries,
And he said that he had heard
That *H*americans spoke *H*inglish,
But he deemed it quite *h*absurd;
Yet he felt the deepest *h*interest
In the missionary work,
And would like to know if Georgia
Was in Boston or New York!

When I left the man-in-gaiters,
He was grumbling, o'er his gin,
At the charges of the hostess
Of that famous Flemish inn;
And he looked a very Briton,
(So, methinks, I see him still)
As he pocketed the candle
That was mentioned in the bill!

CAPTAIN JONES'S MISADVENTURE.

I.

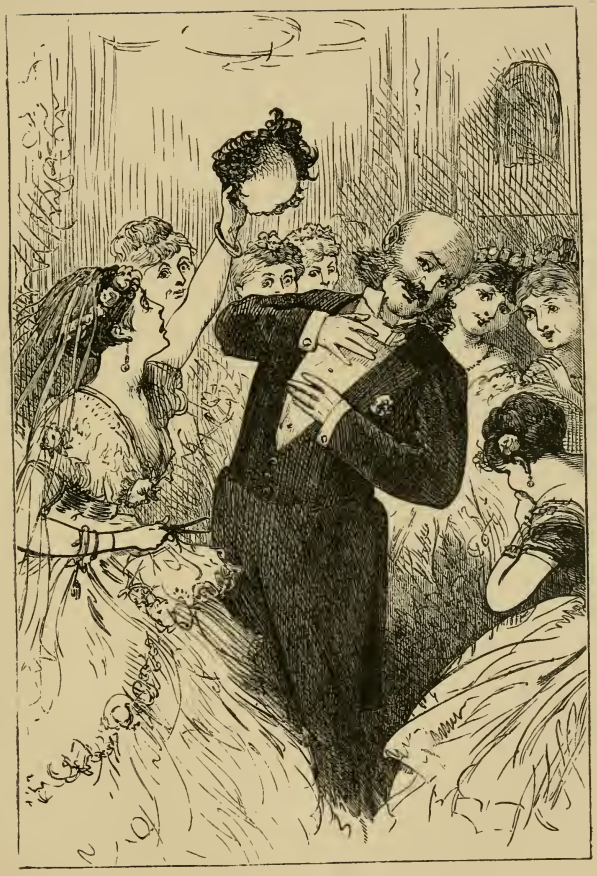
CAPTAIN JONES was five-feet ten,
(The height of CHESTERFIELD'S gentlemen,)
With a manly breadth of shoulder;
And Captain JONES was straight and trim,
With nothing about him anywise slim,
And had for a leg as perfect a limb
As ever astonished beholder!

II.

With a calf of such a notable size
'T would surely have taken the highest prize
At any fair Fair in creation;
'T was just the leg for a prince to sport
Who wished to stand at a Royal Court,
At the head of Foreign Legation!

III.

And Captain JONES had an elegant foot,
'T was just the thing for his patent boot,
And could so prettily shove it,
'T was a genuine pleasure to see it repeat
In the public walks the Milonian feat
Of bearing the calf above it!



IV.

But the Captain's prominent personal charm
Was neither his foot, nor leg, nor arm,
Nor his very *distingué* air;
Nor was it, although you 're thinking upon 't,
The front of his head, but his head and front
Of beautiful coal-black hair!

V.

So very bright was the gloss they had,
'T would have made a rival raving mad
To look at his raven curls;
Wherever he went, the Captain's hair
Was certain to fix the public stare,
And the constant cry was, "I declare!"
And "Did you ever!" and "Just look there!"
Among the dazzled girls.

VI.

Now Captain JONES was a master bold
Of a merchant-ship some dozen years old,
And every name could have easily told,
(And never confound the "hull" and the "hold,"
Throughout her inventory;
And he had travelled in foreign parts,
And learned a number of foreign arts,
And played the deuce with foreign hearts,
As the Captain told the story.

VII.

He had learned to chatter the French and Spanish,
To splutter the Dutch, and mutter the Danish,
In a way that sounded oracular;
Had gabbled among the Portuguese;
And caught the Tartar, or, rather, a piece
Of "broken China," it was n't Chinese,
Any more than his own vernacular!

VIII.

How Captain JONES was wont to shine
In the line of ships! (not Ships of the Line,)
How he 'd brag of the water over his wine,
And of woman over the water!
And then, if you credit the Captain's phrase,
He was more expert in such queer ways
As "doubling capes" and "putting in stays,"
Than any milliner's daughter!

IX.

Now the Captain kept in constant pay
A single Mate, as a Captain may
(In a nautical, not in a naughty way,
As "mates" are sometimes carried);
But to hear him prose of the squalls that arose
In the dead of the night to break his repose,
Of white-caps and cradles, and such things as those,
And of breezes that ended in regular blows,
You 'd have sworn the Captain was married!

X.

The Captain's morals were fair enough,
Though a sailor's life is rather rough,
By dint of the ocean's force;
And that one who makes so many, in ships,
Should make, upon shore, occasional "trips,"
Seems quite a matter of course.

XI.

And Captain JONES was stiff as a post
To the vulgar fry, but among the most
Genteel and polished, ruled the roast,
As no professional cook could boast
That ever you set your eye on;
Indeed, 't was enough to make him vain,
For the pretty and proud confessed his reign,
And Captain JONES, in manners and mane,
Was deemed a genuine lion.

XII.

And the Captain revelled early and late,
At the balls and routs of the rich and great,
And seemed the veriest child of *fêtes*,
Though merely a minion of pleasure;
And he laughed with the girls in merry sport,
And paid the mammas the civilest court,
And drank their wine, whatever the sort,
By the nautical rule of "Any port—"
You may add the rest at leisure.

XIII.

Miss SUSAN BROWN was a dashing girl
As ever revolved in the waltz's whirl,
Or twinkled a foot in the polka's twirl,
By the glare of spermaceti;
And SUSAN's form was trim and slight,
And her beautiful skin, as if in spite
Of her dingy name, was exceedingly white,
And her azure eyes were "sparkling and bright,"
And so was her favorite ditty.

XIV.

And SUSAN BROWN had a score of names,
Like the very voluminous Mr. JAMES
(Who got at the Font his strongest claims
To be reckoned a Man of Letters);
But thinking the task will hardly please
Scholars who 've taken the higher degrees,
To be set repeating their A, B, C's,
I choose to reject such fetters as these,
Though merely Nominal fetters.

XV.

The patronymical name of the maid
Was so completely overlaid
With a long prænominal cover,
That if each additional proper noun
Was laid with additional emphasis down,
Miss SUSAN was done uncommonly BROWN,
The moment her christ'ning was over!

XVI.

And SUSAN was versed in modern romance,
In the Modes of MURRAY and Modes of France,
And had learned to sing and learned to dance,
In a style decidedly pretty;
And SUSAN was versed in classical lore,
In the works of HORACE, and several more
Whose *opera* now would be voted a bore
By the lovers of DONIZETTI.

XVII.

And SUSAN was rich. Her provident sire
Had piled the dollars up higher and higher,
By dint of his personal labors,
Till he reckoned at last a sufficient amount
To be counted, himself, a man of account
Among his affluent neighbors.

XVIII.

By force of careful culture alone,
Old BROWN's estate had rapidly grown
A plum for his only daughter;
And, after all the fanciful dreams
Of golden fountains and golden streams,
The sweat of patient labor seems
The true Pactolian water.

XIX.

And while your theorist worries his mind
In hopes the magical stone to find,
By some alchemical gammon,
Practical people, by regular knocks,
Are filling their "pockets full of rocks"
From the golden mountain of Mammon!

XX.

With charms like these, you may well suppose
Miss SUSAN BROWN had plenty of beaux,
Breathing nothing but passion;
And twenty sought her hand to gain,
And twenty sought her hand in vain,
Were "cut," and did n't "come again,"
In the Ordinary fashion.

XXI.

Captain JONES, by the common voice,
At length was voted the man of her choice,
And she his favorite fair;
It was n't the Captain's manly face,
His native sense, nor foreign grace,
That took her heart from its proper place
And put it into a tenderer case,
But his beautiful coal-black hair!

XXII.

How it is, *why* it is, none can tell,
But all philosophers know full well,
Though puzzled about the action,
That of all the forces under the sun
You can hardly find a stronger one
Than capillary attraction.

XXIII.

The locks of canals are strong as rocks;
And wedlock is strong as a banker's box;

And there 's strength in the locks a Cockney cocks
At innocent birds, to give himself knocks;
In the locks of safes, and those safety-locks
They call the Permutation;
But of all the locks that ever were made
In Nature's shops, or the shops of trade,
The subtlest combination
Of beauty and strength is found in those
Which grace the heads of belles and beaux
In every civilized nation!

XXIV.

The gossips whispered it through the town,
That Captain JONES loved SUSAN BROWN;
But, speaking with due precision,
The gossips' tattle was out of joint,
For the lady's "blunt" was the only point
That dazzled the lover's vision!

XXV.

And the Captain begged, in his smoothest tones,
Miss SUSAN BROWN to be Mistress JONES, —
Flesh of his flesh and bone of his bones,
Till death the union should sever;
For these are the words employed, of course,
Though Death is cheated, sometimes, by Divorce,
A fact which gives an equivocal force
To that beautiful phrase, "forever!"

XXVI.

And SUSAN sighed the conventional "Nay"
In such a bewitching, affirmative way,
The Captain perceived 't was the feminine "Ay,"
And sealed it in such commotion,
That no "lip-service" that ever was paid
To the ear of a god, or the cheek of a maid,
Looked more like real devotion!

XXVII.

And SUSAN'S Mamma made an elegant *fête*,
And exhibited all the family plate,
In honor of SUSAN'S lover;
For now 't was settled, another trip
Over the sea in his merchant-ship,
And his bachelor-ship was over.

XXVIII.

There was an Alderman, well to do,
Who was fond of talking about *vertu*,
And had, besides, the genuine *goût*,
If one might credit his telling;
And the boast was true beyond a doubt
If he had only pronounced it "gout,"
According to English spelling!

XXIX.

A crockery-merchant of great parade,
Always boasting of having made
His large estate in the China trade;
Several affluent tanners;
A lawyer, whose most important "case"
Was that which kept his books in place;

His wife, a lady of matchless grace,
Who bought her form, and made her face,
And plainly borrowed her manners ;

XXX.

A druggist ; an undevout divine ;
A banker, who 'd got as rich as a mine
"In the cotton trade and sugar line,"
Along the Atlantic border ;
A doctor, fumbling his golden seals ;
And an undertaker close at his heels,
Quite in the natural order!

XXXI.

People of rank, and people of wealth,
Plethoric people in delicate health
(Who fast in public, and feast by stealth),
And people slender and hearty
Flocked in so fast, 't was plain to the eye
Of any observer standing by,
That party-spirit was running high,
And this was the popular party!

XXXII.

To tell what griefs and woes betide
The hapless world, from female pride,
Were a long and dismal story;
Alas for SUSAN and womankind!
A sudden ambition seized her mind,
In the height of her party-glory.

XXXIII.

To pique a group of laughing girls
Who stood admiring the Captain's curls,
She formed the resolution
To get a lock of her lover's hair,
In the gaze of the guests assembled there,
By some expedient, foul or fair,
Before the party's conclusion.

XXXIV.

"Only a lock, dear Captain! no more,
'A lock for memory,' I implore!"
But JONES, the gayest of quizzers,
Replied, as he gave his eye a cock,
"'T is a treacherous memory needs a lock,"
And dodged the envious scissors.

XXXV.

Alas that SUSAN could n't refrain,
In her zeal the precious lock to gain,
From laying her hand on the lion's mane!
To see the cruel mocking,
And hear the short, affected cough,
The general titter, and chuckle, and scoff,
When the Captain's Patent Wig came off,
Was really dreadfully shocking!

XXXVI.

Of SUSAN'S swoon, the tale is told,
That long before her earthly mould
Regained its ghostly tenant,
Her luckless, wigless, loveless lover
Was on the sea, and "half-seas-over,"
Dreaming that some piratical rover
Had carried away his Pennant!

MIRALDA:

A TALE OF CUBA.[1]

I.

In Cuba, when that lovely land
Saw Tacon reigning in his glory,
How Justice held, at his command,
Her balance with an even hand —
Learn while you listen to my story.

II.

Miralda — such her maiden name —
Was poor and fair, and gay and witty,
Yet in Havana not a dame
In satin had a fairer fame,
Or owned a face one half so pretty.

III.

For years she plied her humble trade
(To sell cigars was her vocation),
And many a gay gallant had paid
More pounds to please the handsome maid
Than pence to buy his soul's salvation.

IV.

But though the maiden, like the sun,
Had smiles for every transient rover,
Her smiles were all the bravest won;
Miralda gave her heart to none
Save Pedro, her affianced lover;

V.

Pedro, a manly youth who bore
His station well as labor's vassal,
The while he plied a nimble oar
For passengers, from shore to shore,
Between the Punta and the Castle.

VI.

The handsome boatman she had learned
To love with fondest, truest passion;
For him she saved the gold she earned;
For him Miralda proudly spurned
The doubtful suit of men of fashion.

VII.

Of these — a giddy, gaudy train,
Strict devotees of wanton Pleasure —
Gay Count Almonté sought to gain
Miralda's love; but all in vain;
Her heart was still her Pedro's treasure.

VIII.

At last the Count, in sheer despair
Of gaining aught by patient suing,
Contrived — the wretch! — a cunning snare,
By wicked force to win and wear
The prize that spurned his gentler wooing.

IX.

One day a dashing Captain came,
Before the morning sun had risen,
And, bowing, begged to know her name.
"Miralda." "Faith! it is the same.
Here, men, conduct the girl to prison!"

X.

"By whose authority?" she said.
"The Governor's!" "Nay, then 't is folly
To question more." She dropped her head,
And followed where the Captain led,
O'erwhelmed with deepest melancholy.

XI.

The prison seems a league or more
From poor Miralda's humble shanty;
Was e'er such treachery before?
The Count Almonté's at the door,
To hand her down from the volanté!

XII.

"Ah, coward!" cried the angry maid;
"This scurvy trick! If Tacon knew it,
Your precious 'Captain,' I 'm afraid,
Would miss, for once, his dress-parade!
Release me, Count, or you may rue it!"

XIII.

"Nay," said the Count, "that may not be;
I cannot let you go at present;
I 'll lock you up awhile," said he;
"If you are lonely, send for me;
I 'll try to make your prison pleasant."

XIV.

Poor Pedro! guess the lad's dismay,
His stark astonishment, at learning
His lady-love had gone away
(But how or whither none could say),
And left no word about returning!

XV.

The man who wrote that "Love is blind"
Could ne'er have known a genuine lover;
Poor Pedro gave his anxious mind
Miralda's hiding-place to find,
And found it ere the day was over.

XVI.

Clad in a friar's garb, he hies
At night to where his love is hidden,
And, favored by his grave disguise,
He learns that she is safe, — and flies,
As he had entered, unforbidden.

XVII.

What could he do? he pondered long
On every plausible suggestion.
Alas! the rich may do a wrong,
And buy their quittance with a song,
If any dare the deed to question!

XVIII.

"Yet *Rumor* whispered long ago
(Although she 's very fond of lying),
'*Tacon loves justice!*' May be so;
Quien sabe? Let his answer show!
I 'll go and see; it is but trying!"

XIX.

And, faith, the boatman kept his word;
To Tacon he the tale related,

Which, when the Governor had heard,
With righteous wrath his breast was stirred.
"Swear, boy," he said, "to what you 've stated!"

XX.

He took the oath, and straight began
For speedy justice to implore him:
Great Tacon frowned, "Be silent, man!"
Then called the guard: away they ran,
And soon the culprit stood before him!

XXI.

Miralda too was standing near,
To witness to his dark transgression.
"Know you, my lord, why you are here?"
"Yes, Excellencia, it is clear
That I must plead an indiscretion."

XXII.

"The uniform your servants wore
In this affair, — how came they by it?
Whose sword was that your Captain bore?
The crime is grave." "Nay, I implore
Your clemency; I can't deny it."

XXIII.

"This damsel here, — has any stain
By act of yours been put upon her?"
"No, Excellencia; all in vain
Were bribes and threats her will to gain, —
I here declare it on my honor!"

XXIV.

"Enough!" the Governor replied,
And added, in a voice of thunder,
"Go, bring a Priest!" What *can* betide?
To shrive? to wed? who can decide?
All stood and mused in silent wonder.

XXV.

The Priest was brought, — a reverend head,
His hands with holy emblems laden.
"Now, Holy Father, please to wed,
And let the rite be quickly sped,
Senor Almonté and this maiden!"

XXVI.

Poor Pedro stood aghast! With fear
And deep dismay Miralda trembled;
While Count Almonté, thus to hear
The words of doom that smote his ear,
His sudden horror ill dissembled.

XXVII.

Too late! for in that presence none
Had dared a whisper of negation.
The words were said; the deed was done;
The Church had joined the two in one
Ere they had breath for lamentation!

XXVIII.

The Count rode off with drooping head,
Cursing his fortune and his folly;
But ere a mile his steed had sped,
A flash! — and lo! the Count is dead,
Slain by a murderous leaden volley.

XXIX.

Soon came the officer who bore
The warrant of his execution,
With, "Excellencia, all is o'er;
Senor Almonté is no more;
Sooth! — 't was a fearful retribution!"

XXX.

"Now let the herald," Tacon said,
"(That none these doings may disparage,)
Proclaim Senor Almonté dead;
And that Miralda take, instead,
His lands, now hers by lawful marriage!"

XXXI.

And so it was the lovers came
To happiness beyond their dreaming,
And ever after blessed the name
Of him who spared a maiden's shame,
And spoiled a villain's wicked scheming.

LE JARDIN MABILLE.

I.

SHOULD you e'er go to France — as of course you intend —
(Though the Great Exposition is now at an end,)
And in Paris should stroll — as I 'm certain you will —
In the Gardens adorned with such exquisite skill
To call them "Elysian" is scarcely to reach
What the grammars entitle a "figure of speech," —
Don't fail, ere you go, for a moment to steal
A look at the spot called the *Jardin Mabille.*

II.

'T is a place of enchantment! a rural retreat
Where Nature and Art in such harmony meet
To form an *Elysium* of music and flowers,
Of moss-covered grottos and fairy-like bowers,
Where lamps blaze in tulips, and glow-worms of gas
Illumine the roses and gleam in the grass, —
That, merely to see it, one cannot but feel
If there 's Heaven on Earth, 't is the *Jardin Mabille!*

III.

But wait until midnight, or, say, one o'clock,
When hither by hundreds the citizens flock,
And strangers unnumbered are strolling around
In the serpentine walks of the beautiful ground;
Just wait, if you please, till the dance is begun,
And then, at the height of the frolic and fun,
Pray look where the bacchanals caper and reel,
And say what you think of the *Jardin Mabille!*

IV.

The music — the maddest that ever you heard —
Strikes up from the stand, and away, at the word,
The dancers revolve, — 't is the waltz, that is all;
The same you have witnessed at many a ball.
There 's nothing extremely surprising in this,

The motion is swift, but there 's little amiss;
You merely remark, "There is plenty of zeal
In the dancers who dance in the *Jardin Mabille!*"

V.

But see! where the people are closing about
Two brazen-browed women; and hark to the shout,
"*La Can-can!* — they 're at it!" — No wonder you stare,
One foot on the pavement, — now two in the air!
A Cockney, intent on this rarest of shows,
Retreats from the shoe that is grazing his nose!
Good lack! till he dies, he 'll remember the heel
That spoiled his new hat in the *Jardin Mabille!*

VI.

There 's drinking and gaming at many a stand;
There 's feasting and flirting on every hand;
The Paphian queen, it were easy to tell,
Is the Abbess, to-night, of yon anchorite cell;
And the marvelling *Turk* (for the Sultan is here!)
Cries, "*Allah! Meshallah!* these Christians are queer!
Such orgies as these very plainly reveal
Why they *don't* take their wives to the *Jardin Mabille!*"

VII.

"A pity!" you sigh, — and a pity it is
Such revels should shame such a garden as this;
Where all that is charming in Nature and Art
Serves only to sully and harden the heart.
"The Devil's own hot-house!" you musingly say,
While turning in sadness and sorrow away;
Reflecting that *Sin* — as you potently feel —
Is the thriftiest plant in the *Jardin Mabille!*

1867.

THE BEAUTY OF BALLSTON.

AFTER PRAED.[2]

In Ballston — once a famous spot,
Ere Saratoga came in fashion —
I had a transient fit of what
The poets call the "tender passion";
In short, when I was young and gay,
And Fancy held the throne of Reason,
I fell in love with Julia May,
The reigning beauty of the season.

Her eyes were blue, and such a pair!
No star in heaven was ever brighter;
Her skin was most divinely fair;
I never saw a shoulder whiter.
And there was something in her form
(*Juste en-bon-point*, I think they term it)
That really was enough to warm
The icy bosom of a hermit!

In sooth, she was a witching girl,
And even women called her pretty,

Who saw her in the waltz's whirl,
Beneath the glare of spermaceti;
Or if they carped — as Candor must
When wounded pride and envy rankle —
'T was only that so full a bust
Should heave above so trim an ankle!

One eve, remote from festive mirth,
We talked of Nature and her treasures;
I said: — "Of all the joys of earth,
Pray name the sweetest of her pleasures."
She gazed with rapture at the moon
That struggled through the spreading beeches,
And answered thus: — "A grove — at noon —
A friend — and lots of cream and peaches!"

I spoke of trees, — the stately oak
That stands the forest's royal leader;
The whispering pine; and then I spoke
Of Lebanon's imperial cedar;
The maple of our colder clime;
The elm with branches intermeeting, —
She thought the palm must be sublime,
And — dates were very luscious eating!
I talked about the sea and sky,
And spoke, with something like emotion,
Of countless pearly gems that lie
Ungathered by the sounding ocean.
She smiled, and said, (was it in jest?)
Of all the shells that Nature boasted
She thought that oysters were the best,
"And, dearest, don't you love 'em roasted!"

I talked of books and classic lore;
I spoke of Cooper's latest fiction,
Recited melodies from Moore,
And lauded Irving's charming diction; —
She sat entranced; then raised her head,
And with a smile that seemed of heaven,
"We must return," the siren said,
"Or we shall lose the lunch at 'leven!"

I can't describe the dreadful shock,
The mingled sense of love and pity,
With which, next day, at ten o'clock,
I started for Manhattan city;
'T was years ago, — that sad "Good by,"
Yet o'er the scene fond memory lingers;
I see the crystals in her eye,
And berry-stains upon her fingers!

Ah me! of so much loveliness
It had been sweet to be the winner;
I know she loved me only less —
The merest fraction — than her dinner.
'T was hard to lose so fair a prize,
But then (I thought) 't were vastly harder
To have before my jealous eyes
A constant rival in my larder!

WHEN I MEAN TO MARRY.

When do I mean to marry? — Well,
'T is idle to dispute with fate;
But if you choose to hear me tell,
Pray listen while I fix the date.

When daughters haste, with eager feet,
A mother's daily toil to share;
Can make the puddings which they eat,
And mend the stockings which they wear;

When maidens look upon a man
As in himself what they would marry,
And not as army-soldiers scan
A sutler or a commissary;

When gentle ladies, who have got
The offer of a lover's hand,
Consent to share his earthly lot,
And do not mean his lot of land;

When young mechanics are allowed
To find and wed the farmers' girls
Who *don't* expect to be endowed
With rubies, diamonds, and pearls;

When wives, in short, shall freely give
Their hearts and hands to aid their spouses,
And live as they were wont to live
Within their sires' one-story houses;

Then, madam, — if I 'm not too old, —
Rejoiced to quit this lonely life,
I 'll brush my beaver; cease to scold;
And look about me for a wife!

A REFLECTIVE RETROSPECT.

'T is twenty years, and something more,
Since, all athirst for useful knowledge,
I took some draughts of classic lore,
Drawn very mild, at —— rd College;
Yet I remember all that one
Could wish to hold in recollection;
The boys, the joys, the noise, the fun;
But not a single Conic Section.

I recollect those harsh affairs,
The morning bells that gave us panics;
I recollect the formal prayers,
That seemed like lessons in Mechanics;
I recollect the drowsy way
In which the students listened to them,
As clearly, in my wig, to-day,
As when, a boy, I slumbered through them.

I recollect the tutors all
As freshly now, if I may say so,
As any chapter I recall
In Homer or Ovidius Naso.
I recollect, extremely well,
"Old Hugh," the mildest of fanatics;
I well remember Matthew Bell,
But very faintly, Mathematics.

I recollect the prizes paid
For lessons fathomed to the bottom;
(Alas that pencil-marks should fade!)
I recollect the chaps who got 'em, —
The light equestrians who soared

O'er every passage reckoned stony;
And took the chalks, — but never scored
A single honor to the pony!

Ah me! what changes Time has wrought,
And how predictions have miscarried!
A few have reached the goal they sought,
And some are dead, and some are married!
And some in city journals war;
And some as politicians bicker;
And some are pleading at the bar —
For jury-verdicts, or for liquor!

And some on Trade and Commerce wait;
And some in schools with dunces battle;
And some the Gospel propagate;
And some the choicest breeds of cattle;
And some are living at their ease;
And some were wrecked in "the revulsion";
Some serve the State for handsome fees,
And one, I hear, upon compulsion!

LAMONT, who, in his college days,
Thought e'en a cross a moral scandal,
Has left his Puritanic ways,
And worships now with bell and candle;
And MANN, who mourned the negro's fate,
And held the slave as most unlucky,
Now holds him, at the market rate,
On a plantation in Kentucky!

TOM KNOX — who swore in such a tone
It fairly might be doubted whether
It really was himself alone,
Or *Knox* and Erebus together —
Has grown a very altered man,
And, changing oaths for mild entreaty,
Now recommends the Christian plan
To savages in Otaheite!

Alas for young ambition's vow!
How envious Fate may overthrow it! —
Poor HARVEY is in Congress now,
Who struggled long to be a poet;
SMITH carves (quite well) memorial stones,
Who tried in vain to make the law go;
HALL deals in hides; and "Pious Jones"
Is dealing faro in Chicago!

And, sadder still, the brilliant HAYS,
Once honest, manly, and ambitious,
Has taken latterly to ways
Extremely profligate and vicious;
By slow degrees — I can't tell how —
He 's reached at last the very groundsel,
And in New York he figures now,
A member of the Common Council!

THE KNOWING CHILD.

"L' Enfant terrible!"

"*MAIS, gardez vouz, mon cher,*"
she said,
And then the mother smiled;

"Speak very softly, if you please,
He's such a knowing child!"

My simple sister spoke the truth;
There is n't, I suppose,
A thing on earth he should n't know
But what that urchin knows!

And all he knows the younker tells
In such a knowing way;
For what he knows, you may be sure,
He does not fear to say.

He knows he is an arrant churl,
Although he looks so mild;
And — worst of all — full well he knows
He is a knowing child.

He knows — I've often told him so —
I am averse to noise;
He knows his uncle is n't fond
Of martial little boys;

And that, no doubt, is why he pounds
His real soldier drum
Beneath my window, morn and night,
Until my ear is numb!

He knows my age — that dreadful boy —
Exactly to a day;
He knows precisely why my locks
Have not a thread of gray.

He knows — and says (what shocking talk
For one so very small!)
My head — without my curly scratch —
Looks like a billiard ball!

He knows that Mary's headache means
She does n't wish to go;
And lets the sacred secret out
Before her waiting beau!

He knows why Clara always coughs
When she is asked to sing;
He knows (and blabs!) that Julia's bust
Is not the real thing!

He knows about the baby too;
Though he has often heard
The nurse's old, convenient tale,
He don't believe a word.

And when those ante-natal caps
Their future use disclose,
He knows again — the knowing imp —
Just what his uncle knows!

Ah! well; no doubt, what Time may bring
'T is better not to see;
I know not what the changeful Fates
May have in store for me;

But if within the nuptial noose
My neck should be beguiled,
Heaven save the house from childlessness
And from a knowing child!

IDEAL AND REAL.

IDEAL.

Some years ago, when I was young,
And Mrs. Jones was Miss Delancy;
When wedlock's canopy was hung
With curtains from the loom of fancy;
I used to paint my future life
With most poetical precision, —

My special wonder of a wife;
My happy days; my nights Elysian.

I saw a lady, rather small
(A Juno was my strict abhorrence),
With flaxen hair, contrived to fall
In careless ringlets, *à la* Lawrence;
A blond complexion; eyes that drew
From autumn clouds their azure brightness;
The foot of Hebe; arms whose hue
Was perfect in its milky whiteness!

I saw a party, quite select, —
There might have been a baker's dozen;
A parson, of the ruling sect;
A bridemaid, and a city cousin;
A formal speech to me and mine,
(Its meaning I could scarce discover;)
A taste of cake; a sip of wine;
Some kissing — and the scene was over!

I saw a baby — one — no more;
A cherub pictured, rather faintly,
Beside a pallid dame who wore
A countenance extremely saintly.
I saw, — but nothing could I hear,
Except the softest prattle, maybe,
The merest breath upon the ear, —
So quiet was that blesséd baby!

REAL.

I see a woman, rather tall,
And yet, I own, a comely lady;
Complexion — such as I must call
(To be exact) a little shady;
A hand not handsome, yet confessed
A generous one for love or pity;
A nimble foot, and — neatly dressed
In No. 5 — extremely pretty!

I see a group of boys and girls
Assembled round the knee paternal
With ruddy cheeks and tangled curls,
And manners not at all supernal.
And one has reached a manly size;
And one aspires to woman's stature;
And one is quite a recent prize,
And all abound in human nature!

The boys are hard to keep in trim;
The girls are often rather trying;
And baby — like the cherubim —
Seems very fond of steady crying!
And yet the precious little one,
His mother's dear, despotic master,
Is worth a thousand babies done
In Parian or in alabaster!

And oft that stately dame and I,
When laughing o'er our early dreaming,
And marking, as the years go by,
How idle was our youthful scheming.
Confess the wiser Power that knew
How *Duty* every joy enhances,
And gave us blessings rich and true,
And better far than all our fancies.

THE GAME OF LIFE.

A HOMILY.

THERE 's a game much in fashion,
— I think it 's called *Euchre*,
(Though I never have played it, for pleasure or lucre,)

In which, when the cards are in
certain conditions,
The players appear to have
changed their positions,
And one of them cries, in a confi-
dent tone,
"I think I may venture to *go it
alone!*

While watching the game, 't is a
whim of the bard's
A moral to draw from that skirmish
of cards,
And to fancy he finds in the trivial
strife
Some excellent hints for the battle
of Life;
Where — whether the prize be a
ribbon or throne —
The winner is he who can go it
alone!

When great Galileo proclaimed
that the world
In a regular orbit was ceaselessly
whirled,
And got — not a convert — for all
of his pains,
But only derision and prison and
chains,
"It moves, *for all that!*" was his
answering tone,
For he knew, like the Earth, he
could go it alone!

When Kepler, with intellect pier-
cing afar,
Discovered the laws of each planet
and star,
And doctors, who ought to have
lauded his name,
Derided his learning, and black-
ened his fame,
"I can *wait!*" he replied, "till the
truth you shall own";
For he felt in his heart he could go
it alone!

Alas! for the player who idly de-
pends,
In the struggle of life, upon kin-
dred or friends;
Whatever the value of blessings
like these,
They can never atone for inglorious
ease,
Nor comfort the coward who finds,
with a groan,
That his crutches have left him to
go it alone!

There 's something, no doubt, in
the hand you may hold,
Health, family, culture, wit, beau-
ty, and gold
The fortunate owner may fairly
regard
As, each in its way, a most excel-
lent card;
Yet the game may be lost, with all
these for your own,
Unless you 've the courage to go it
alone!

In battle or business, whatever the
game,
In law or in love, it is ever the
same;
In the struggle for power, or the
scramble for pelf,
Let this be your motto, — *Rely on
yourself!*
For, whether the prize be a ribbon
or throne,
The victor is he who can go it
alone!

THE PUZZLED CENSUS-TAKER.

"Got any boys?" the Marshal
said
To a lady from over the Rhine;

And the lady shook her flaxen head,
And civilly answered, "*Nein!*" *

"Got any girls?" the Marshal said
To the lady from over the Rhine;
And again the lady shook her head,
And civilly answered, "*Nein!*"

"But some are dead?" the Marshal said
To the lady from over the Rhine;
And again the lady shook her head,
And civilly answered, "*Nein!*"

"Husband of course?" the Marshal said
To the lady from over the Rhine;
And again she shook her flaxen head,
And civilly answered, "*Nein!*"

"The devil you have!" the Marshal said
To the lady from over the Rhine;
And again she shook her flaxen head,
And civilly answered, "*Nein!*"

"Now what do you mean by shaking your head,
And always answering, '*Nine*'?"
"*Ich kann nicht Englisch!*" civilly said
The lady from over the Rhine.

THE HEART AND THE LIVER.

MUSINGS OF A DYSPEPTIC.

I.

SHE 's broken-hearted, I have heard, —
Whate'er may be the reason;
(Such things will happen now and then
In Love's tempestuous season;)
But still I marvel she should show
No plainer outward token,
If such a vital inward part
Were very badly broken!

II.

She 's broken-hearted, I am told,
And so, of course, believe it;
When truth is fairly certified
I modestly receive it;
But after such an accident,
It surely is a blessing,
It does n't in the least impair
Her brilliant style of dressing!

III.

She 's broken-hearted: who can doubt
The noisy voice of Rumor?
And yet she seems — for such a wreck —
In no unhappy humor;
She sleeps (I hear) at proper hours,
When other folks are dozy;
Her eyes are sparkling as of yore,
And still her cheeks are rosy!

IV.

She 's broken-hearted, and they say
She never can recover;
And then — in not the mildest way —
They blame some fickle lover;
I know she 's dying — by degrees —
But, sure as I 'm a sinner,
I saw her eat, the other day,
A most prodigious dinner!

V.

Alas! that I, in idle rhyme,
Should e'er profanely question
(As I have done while musing o'er
My chronic indigestion)

* *Nein*, pronounced *nine*, is the German for "*No*."

If one should not receive the blow
With blessings on the Giver,
That only falls upon the heart,
And kindly spares the LIVER!

ABOUT HUSBANDS.

"A man is, in general, better pleased when he has a good dinner upon his table, than when his wife speaks Greek." — SAM. JOHNSON.

JOHNSON was right. I don't agree to all
The solemn dogmas of the rough old stager;
But very much approve what one may call
The minor morals of the "Ursa Major."

Johnson was right. Although some men adore
Wisdom in woman, and with learning cram her,
There is n't one in ten but thinks far more
Of his own grub than of his spouse's grammar.

I know it is the greatest shame in life;
But who among them (save, perhaps, myself)
Returning hungry home, but asks his wife
What beef — not books — she has upon the shelf?

Though Greek and Latin be the lady's boast,
They 're little valued by her loving mate;
The kind of tongue that husbands relish most
Is modern, boiled, and served upon a plate.

Or if, as fond ambition may command,
Some home-made verse the happy matron show him,
What mortal spouse but from her dainty hand
Would sooner see a pudding than a poem?

Young lady, — deep in love with Tom or Harry, —
'T is sad to tell you such a tale as this;
But here 's the moral of it: Do not marry;
Or, marrying, take your lover as he is, —

A very man, — with something of the brute
(Unless he prove a sentimental noddy),
With passions strong and appetite to boot,
A thirsty soul within a hungry body.

A very man, — not one of nature's clods, —
With human failings, whether saint or sinner;
Endowed, perhaps, with genius from the gods,
But apt to take his temper from his dinner.

WHERE THERE'S A WILL THERE'S A WAY.

"Aut viam inveniam, aut faciam."

IT was a noble Roman,
In Rome's imperial day,
Who heard a coward croaker,
Before the Castle, say:
"They 're safe in such a fortress;
There is no way to shake it!"
"On — on!" exclaimed the hero,
"*I 'll find a way, or make it!*"

Is *Fame* your aspiration?
  Her path is steep and high;
In vain he seeks her temple,
  Content to gaze and sigh:
The shining throne is waiting,
  But he alone can take it
Who says, with Roman firmness,
  "*I'll find a way, or make it!*"

Is *Learning* your ambition?
  There is no royal road;
Alike the peer and peasant
  Must climb to her abode:
Who feels the thirst of knowledge,
  In Helicon may slake it,
If he has still the Roman will
  "*To find a way, or make it!*"

Are *Riches* worth the getting?
  They must be bravely sought;
With wishing and with fretting
  The boon cannot be bought:
To all the prize is open,
  But only he can take it
Who says, with Roman courage,
  "*I'll find a way, or make it!*"

In *Love's* impassioned warfare
  The tale has ever been,
That victory crowns the valiant, —
  The brave are they who win:
Though strong is Beauty's castle,
  A lover still may take it,
Who says, with Roman daring,
  "*I'll find a way, or make it!*"

A BENEDICT'S APPEAL TO A BACHELOR.

"Double! double!" — SHAKESPEARE.

I.

DEAR CHARLES, be persuaded to wed, —
  For a sensible fellow like you,
It's high time to think of a bed,
  And muffins and coffee for two!
So have done with your doubt and delaying, —
  With a soul so adapted to mingle,
No wonder the neighbors are saying
  'T is singular you should be single!

II.

Don't say that you have n't got time,
  That business demands your attention;
There 's not the least reason nor rhyme
  In the wisest excuse you can mention.
Don't tell me about "other fish," —
  Your duty is done when you buy 'em;
And you never will relish the dish,
  Unless you 've a woman to fry 'em!

III.

Don't listen to querulous stories
  By desperate damsels related,
Who sneer at connubial glories,
  Because they 've known couples mismated.
Such people, if they had their pleasure,
  Because silly bargains are made,
Would deem it a rational measure
  To lay an embargo on trade!

IV.

You may dream of poetical fame,
  But your wishes may chance to miscarry;
The best way of sending one's name
  To posterity, Charles, is to marry!
And here I am willing to own,
  After soberly thinking upon it,
I 'd very much rather be known
  For a beautiful son, than a sonnet!

V.

To Procrastination be deaf, —
(A homily sent from above,)—
The scoundrel 's not only "the thief
Of time," but of beauty and love!
O, delay not one moment to win
A prize that is truly worth winning;
Celibacy, Charles, is a sin,
And sadly prolific of sinning!

VI.

Then pray bid your doubting good by,
And dismiss all fantastic alarms.
I 'll be sworn you 've a girl in your eye
'T is your duty to have in your arms!
Some trim little maiden of twenty,
A beautiful, azure-eyed elf,
With virtues and graces in plenty,
And no failing but loving yourself!

VII.

Don't search for "an angel" a minute;
For granting you win in the sequel,
The deuce, after all, would be in it,
With a union so very unequal!
The angels, it must be confessed,
In *this* world are rather uncommon;
And allow me, dear Charles, to suggest
You 'll be better content with a woman!

VIII.

I could furnish a bushel of reasons
For choosing a conjugal mate:
It agrees with all climates and seasons,
And gives you a "double estate"!
To one's parents 't is (gratefully) due, —
Just think what a terrible thing
'T would have been, sir, for me and for you,
If *ours* had forgotten the ring!

IX.

Then there 's the economy — clear,
By poetical algebra shown, —
If your wife has a grief or a fear,
One half, by the law, is your own!
And as to the joys — by division,
They 're nearly quadrupled, 't is said
(Though I never could see the addition
Quite plain in the item of bread).

X.

Remember, I do not pretend
There 's anything "perfect" about it,
But this I 'll aver to the end,
Life 's very imperfect without it.
'T is not that there 's "poetry" in it, —
As, doubtless, there may be to those
Endowed with a genius to win it, —
But I 'll warrant you excellent prose!

XI.

Then, Charles, be persuaded to wed, —
For a sensible fellow like you,
It 's high time to think of a bed,
And muffins and coffee for two;
So have done with your doubt and delaying, —
With a soul so adapted to mingle,
No wonder the neighbors are saying
'T is singular you should be single!

THE GHOST-PLAYER.

A BALLAD.

TOM GOODWIN was an actor-man,
Old Drury's pride and boast
In all the light and sprite-ly parts,
Especially the Ghost.

Now, Tom was very fond of drink,
Of almost every sort,
Comparative and positive,
From porter up to port.

But grog, like grief, is fatal stuff
For any man to sup;
For when it fails to pull him down,
It 's sure to blow him up.

And so it fared with ghostly Tom,
Who day by day was seen
A-swelling, till (as lawyers say)
He fairly lost his lean.

At length the manager observed
He 'd better leave his post,
And said he played the very deuce
Whene'er he played the Ghost.

'T was only t' other night he saw
A fellow swing his hat,
And heard him cry, "By all the gods!
The Ghost is getting fat!"

'T would never do, the case was plain;
His eyes he could n't shut;
Ghosts should n't make the people laugh,
And Tom was quite a *butt*.

Tom's actor friends said ne'er a word
To cheer his drooping heart;
Though more than one was burning up
With zeal to "take his part."

Tom argued very plausibly;
He said he did n't doubt
That Hamlet's father drank, and grew,
In years, a little stout.

And so 't was natural, he said,
And quite a proper plan,
To have his spirit represent
A portly sort of man.

'T was all in vain: the manager
Said he was not in sport,
And, like a gen'ral, bade poor Tom
Surrender up his *forte*.

He 'd do, perhaps, in heavy parts,
Might answer for a monk,
Or porter to the elephant,
To carry round his trunk;

But in the Ghost his day was past, —
He 'd never do for that;
A Ghost might just as well be dead
As plethoric and fat!

Alas! next day poor Tom was found
As stiff as any post;
For he had lost his character,
And given up the Ghost!

"DO YOU THINK HE IS MARRIED?"

MADAM, — you are very pressing,
And I can't decline the task;
With the slightest gift of guessing,
You would scarcely need to ask.

Don't you see a hint of marriage
In his sober-sided face?
In his rather careless carriage,
And extremely rapid pace?

If he 's not committed treason,
Or some wicked action done,
Can you see the faintest reason
Why a bachelor should run?

Why should *he* be in a flurry?
But a loving wife to greet
Is a circumstance to hurry
The most dignified of feet.

When afar the man has spied her,
If the grateful, happy elf
Does not haste to be beside her,
He must be beside himself!

It is but a trifle, maybe, —
But observe his practised tone,
When he calms your stormy baby,
Just as if it were his own!

Do you think a certain meekness
You have mentioned in his looks
Is a chronic optic weakness
That has come of reading books?

Did you ever see his vision
Peering underneath a hood,
Save enough for recognition,
As a civil person should?

Could a Capuchin be colder
When he glances, as he must,
At a finely rounded shoulder,
Or a proudly swelling bust?

Madam, think of every feature,
Then deny it, if you can,
He 's a fond, connubial creature,
And a *very* married man!

A COLLEGE REMINISCENCE.

ADDRESSED TO THOMAS B. THORPE, ESQ., OF NEW ORLEANS.

DEAR TOM, have you forgot the day
When, long ago, we used to stray
Among the "Haddams"?
Where, in the mucky road, a man
(The road was built on Adam's plan,
And not McAdam's!)
Went down — down — down, one stormy night,
And disappeared from human sight,
All save his hat, —
Which raised in sober minds a sense
Of some mysterious Providence
In sparing that?

I think 't will please you, Tom, to hear
The man who in that night of fear
Went down terrestrial,
Worked out a passage like a miner,
And, pricking through somewhere in China,
Came up Celestial!

Ah! those were memorable times,
And worth embalming in my rhymes,
When, at the summons
Of chapel bell, we left our sport
For lessons most uncommon short,
Or shorter commons!

I mind me, Tom, you often drew
Nice portraits, and exceeding true —
To your intention!
The most impracticable faces
Discovered unsuspected graces,
By your invention.

On brainless heads the finest bumps
(Erected by your pencil-thumps)
Were plainly seen;
Your Yankees all were very Greek,
Unchosen aunts grew "choice antique,"
And blues turned green!

The swarthy suddenly were fair,
And yellow changed to auburn hair
Or sunny flax;
And people very thin and flat,
Like Aldermen grew round and fat
On canvas-backs!

I well remember all your art
To make the best of every part, —
I am certain *no* man
Could better coax a wrinkle out,
Or elevate a lowly snout,
Or snub a Roman!

Young gentlemen with leaden eyes
Stared wildly out on lowering skies,
Quite Corsair-fashion;
And greenish orbs got very blue,
And linsey-woolsey maidens grew
Almost Circassian!

And many an ancient maiden aunt
As lean and lank as John O'Gaunt,
Or even lanker,
By art transformed and newly drest,
Could boast for once as full a chest
As — any banker!

Ah! we were jolly youngsters then,
But now we 're sober-sided men,
Half through life's journey;
And you 've turned author, Tom,
I hear, —
And I — you 'll think it very
queer —
Have turned attorney!

Heaven bless you, Tom, in house
and heart!
(That we should live so far apart
Is much a pity),
And may you multiply your name,
And have a very "crescent" fame,
Just like your city!

EARLY RISING.

"God bless the man who first invented sleep!"
So Sancho Panza said, and so
say I:
And bless him, also, that he did n't
keep
His great discovery to himself;
nor try
To make it — as the lucky fellow
might —
A close monoply by patent-right!

Yes; bless the man who first invented sleep
(I really can't avoid the iteration);
But blast the man, with curses
loud and deep,
Whate'er the rascal's name, or
age, or station,
Who first invented, and went round
advising,
That artifical cut-off, — Early
Rising!

"Rise with the lark, and with the
lark to bed,"
Observes some solemn, sentimental owl;
Maxims like these are very cheaply
said;
But, ere you make yourself a fool
or fowl,
Pray just inquire about his rise
and fall,
And whether larks have any beds
at all!

The time for honest folks to be
abed
Is in the morning, if I reason
right;
And he who cannot keep his precious head
Upon his pillow till it 's fairly
light,
And so enjoy his forty morning
winks,
Is up to knavery; or else — he
drinks!

Thomson, who sung about the
"Seasons," said
It was a glorious thing to *rise* in
season;

But then he said it — lying — in his bed,
At ten o'clock, A. M., — the very reason
He wrote so charmingly. The simple fact is,
His preaching was n't sanctioned by his practice.

'T is, doubtless, well to be sometimes awake, —
Awake to duty, and awake to truth, —
But when, alas! a nice review we take
Of our best deeds and days, we find, in sooth,
The hours that leave the slightest cause to weep
Are those we passed in childhood or asleep!

'T is beautiful to leave the world awhile
For the soft visions of the gentle night;
And free, at last, from mortal care or guile,
To live as only in the angels' sight,
In sleep's sweet realm so cosily shut in,
Where, at the worst, we only *dream* of sin!

So let us sleep, and give the Maker praise.
I like the lad who, when his father thought
To clip his morning nap by hackneyed phrase
Of vagrant worm by early songster caught,
Cried, "Served him right! — it's not at all surprising;
The worm was punished, sir, for early rising!"

THE LADY ANN.

A BALLAD.

"SHE 'll soon be here, the Lady Ann,"
The children cried in glee;
"She always comes at four o'clock,
And now it 's striking three."

At stroke of four the lady came,
A lady passing fair;
And she sat and gazed adown the road,
With a long and eager stare.

"The mail! the mail!" the idlers cried,
At sight of a coach-and-four;
"The mail! the mail!" and at the word,
The coach was at the door.

Up sprang in haste the Lady Ann,
And marked with anxious eye
The travellers, who, one by one,
Were slowly passing by.

"Alack! alack!" the lady cried,
"He surely named to-day;
He 'll come to-morrow, then," she sighed,
And, turning, strolled away.

"'T is passing odd, upon my word,"
The landlord now began;
"A strange romance! — that woman, sirs,
Is called the Lady Ann.

"She dwells hard by upon the hill,
The widow of Sir John,
Who died abroad, come August next,
Just twenty years agone.

"A hearty neighbor, sirs, was he,
A bold, true-hearted man;
And a fonder pair were seldom seen
Than he and Lady Ann.

"They scarce had been a twelve-month wed,
When — ill betide the day! —
Sir John was called to go in haste
Some hundred miles away.

"Ne'er lovers in the fairy tales
A truer love could boast;
And many were the gentle words
That came and went by post.

"A month or more had passed away,
When by the post came down
The joyous news that such a day
Sir John would be in town.

"Full gleesome was the Lady Ann
To read the welcome word,
And promptly at the hour she came,
To meet her wedded lord.

"Alas! alas! he came not back.
There only came instead
A mournful message by the post,
That good Sir John was dead!

"One piercing shriek, and Lady Ann
Had swooned upon the floor:
Good sirs, it was a fearful grief
That gentle lady bore!

"We raised her up; her ebbing life
Began again to dawn;
She muttered wildly to herself, —
'T was plain her wits were gone.

"A strange forgetfulness came o'er
Her sad, bewildered mind,
And to the grief that drove her mad
Her memory was blind!

"Ah! since that hour she little wots
Full twenty years are fled!
She little wots, poor Lady Ann!
Her wedded lord is dead.

"But each returning day she deems
The day he fixed to come;
And ever at the wonted hour
She 's here to greet him home.

"And when the coach is at the door,
She marks with eager eye
The travellers, as one by one
They 're slowly passing by.

"'Alack!' she cries, in plaintive tone,
'He surely named to-day!
He 'll come to-morrow, then,' she sighs,
And, turning, strolls away."

HOW THE MONEY GOES.

How goes the Money? — Well,
I 'm sure it is n't hard to tell;
It goes for rent, and water-rates,
For bread and butter, coal and grates,
Hats, caps, and carpets, hoops and hose, —
And that 's the way the Money goes!

How goes the Money? — Nay,
Don't everybody know the way?
It goes for bonnets, coats, and capes,
Silks, satins, muslins, velvets, crapes,
Shawls, ribbons, furs, and furbelows, —
And that 's the way Money goes!

How goes the Money? — Sure,
I wish the ways were something fewer;
It goes for wages, taxes, debts;
It goes for presents, goes for bets,
For paint, *pommade*, and *eau de rose*, —
And that 's the way the Money goes!

How goes the Money? — Now,
I 've scarce begun to mention how;
It goes for laces, feathers, rings,
Toys, dolls — and other baby-things,
Whips, whistles, candies, bells, and bows, —
And that 's the way the Money goes!

How goes the Money? — Come,
I know it does n't go for rum;
It goes for schools and sabbath chimes,
It goes for charity — sometimes;
For missions, and such things as those, —
And that 's the way the Money goes!

How goes the Money? — There!
I 'm out of patience, I declare;
It goes for plays, and diamond-pins,
For public alms, and private sins,
For hollow shams, and silly shows, —
And that 's the way the Money goes!

SAINT JONATHAN.

There 's many an excellent Saint, —
St. George, with his dragon and lance;
St. Patrick, so jolly and quaint;
St. Vitus, the saint of the dance;
St. Denis, the saint of the Gaul;
St. Andrew, the saint of the Scot;
But Jonathan, youngest of all,
Is the mightiest saint of the lot!

He wears a most serious face,
Well worthy a martyr's possessing;
But it is n't all owing to grace,
But partly to thinking and guessing;
In sooth, our American Saint
Has rather a secular bias,
And I never have heard a complaint
Of his being excessively pious!

He 's fond of financial improvement,
And is always extremely inclined
To be starting some practical movement
For mending the morals and mind.
Do you ask me what wonderful labors
St. Jonathan ever has done
To rank with his Calendar neighbors?
Just listen, a moment, to one:

One day when a flash in the air
Split his meeting-house fairly asunder,
Quoth Jonathan, "Now, I declare,
They 're dreadfully careless with thunder!"
So he fastened a rod to the steeple;
And now, when the lightning comes round,
He keeps it from building and people,
By running it into the ground!

Reflecting, with pleasant emotion,
On the capital job he had done,
Quoth JONATHAN: "I have a notion
Improvements have barely begun;
If nothing 's created in vain, —
As ministers often inform us, —
The lightning that 's wasted, 't is plain
Is really something enormous!"

While ciphering over the thing,
At length he discovered a plan
To catch the Electrical King,
And make him the servant of man;
And now, in an orderly way,
He flies on the fleetest of pinions,
And carries the news of the day
All over his master's dominions!

One morning, while taking a stroll,
He heard a lugubrious cry, —
Like the shriek of a suffering soul, —
In a Hospital standing near by;
Anon, such a terrible groan
Saluted ST. JONATHAN's ear
That his bosom — which was n't of stone —
Was melted with pity to hear.

That night he invented a charm
So potent that folks who employ it,
In losing a leg or an arm,
Don't suffer, but rather enjoy it!
A miracle, you must allow,
As good as the best of his brothers, —
And blesséd ST. JONATHAN now
Is patron of cripples and mothers!

There 's many an excellent Saint, —
St. George, with his dragon and lance;
St. Patrick, so jolly and quaint;
St. Vitus, the saint of the dance;
St. Denis, the saint of the Gaul;
St. Andrew, the saint of the Scot;
But JONATHAN, youngest of all,
Is the mightiest saint of the lot!

SONG OF SARATOGA.

"PRAY, what do they do at the Springs?"
The question is easy to ask;
But to answer it fully, my dear,
Were rather a serious task.
And yet, in a bantering way,
As the magpie or mocking-bird sings,
I 'll venture a bit of a song
To tell what they do at the Springs!

Imprimis, my darling, they drink
The waters so sparkling and clear;
Though the flavor is none of the best,
And the odor exceedingly queer;
But the fluid is mingled, you know,
With wholesome medicinal things,
So they drink, and they drink, and they drink, —
And that 's what they do at the Springs!

Then with appetites keen as a knife,
They hasten to breakfast or dine;
(The latter precisely at three,
The former from seven till nine.)
Ye gods! what a rustle and rush
When the eloquent dinner-bell rings!
Then they eat, and they eat, and they eat, —
And that 's what they do at the Springs!

Now they stroll in the beautiful walks,
Or loll in the shade of the trees;
Where many a whisper is heard
That never is told by the breeze;
And hands are commingled with hands,
Regardless of conjugal rings;
And they flirt, and they flirt, and they flirt, —
And that 's what they do at the Springs!

The drawing-rooms now are ablaze,
And music is shrieking away;
Terpsichore governs the hour,
And Fashion was never so gay!
An arm round a tapering waist,
How closely and fondly it clings!
So they waltz, and they waltz, and they waltz, —
And that 's what they do at the Springs!

In short — as it goes in the world —
They eat, and they drink, and they sleep;
They talk, and they walk, and they woo;
They sigh, and they laugh, and they weep;
They read, and they ride, and they dance;
(With other unspeakable things;)
They pray, and they play, and they *pay*, —
And that 's what they do at the Springs!

TALE OF A DOG.

IN TWO PARTS.

PART FIRST.

I.

"CURSE on all curs!" I heard a cynic cry;
A wider malediction than he thought, —
For what 's a cynic? — Had he cast his eye
Within his dictionary, he had caught
This much of learning, — the untutored elf, —
That he, unwittingly, had cursed himself!

II.

"Beware of dogs," the great Apostle writes;
A rather brief and sharp philippic sent
To the Philippians. The paragraph invites
Some little question as to its intent,
Among the best expositors; but then
I find they all agree that "dogs" meant *men!*

III.

Beware of men! a moralist might say,
And women too; 't were but a prudent hint,
Well worth observing in a general way,
But having surely no conclusion in 't.
(As saucy satirists are wont to rail,)
All men are faithless, and all women frail.

IV.

And so of dogs 't were wrong to dogmatize
Without discrimination or degree;
For one may see, with half a pair of eyes,
That they have characters as well as we:
I hate the rascal who can walk the street
Caning all canines he may chance to meet.

V.

I had a dog that was not all a dog,
For in his nature there was something human;
Wisely he looked as any pedagogue;
Loved funerals and weddings, like a woman;
With this (still human) weakness, I confess,
Of always judging people by their dress.

VI.

He hated beggars, it was very clear,
And oft was seen to drive them from the door;
But that was education; — for a year,
Ere yet his puppyhood was fairly o'er,
He lived with a Philanthropist, and caught
His practices; the precepts he forgot!

VII.

Which was a pity; yet the dog, I grant,
Led, on the whole, a very worthy life.
To teach you industry, "Go to the ant,"
(I mean the insect, not your uncle's wife;)
But — though the counsel sounds a little rude —
Go to the dogs, for love and gratitude.

PART SECOND.

VIII.

"Throw physic to the dogs," the poet cries;
A downright insult to the canine race;
There 's not a puppy but is far too wise
To put a pill or powder in his face.
Perhaps the poet merely meant to say,
That physic, thrown to dogs, is thrown away, —

IX.

Which (as the parson said about the dice)
Is the best throw that any man can choose;
Take, if you 're ailing, medical advice, —
Minus the medicine, — which, of course, refuse.
Drugging, no doubt, occasioned Homœopathy,
And all the dripping horrors of Hydropathy.

X.

At all events, 't is fitting to remark,
Dogs spurn at drugs; their daily bark and whine
Are not at all the musty wine and bark
The doctors give to patients in decline;
And yet a dog who felt a fracture's smart
Once thanked a kind chirurgeon for his art.

XI.

I 've heard a story, and believe it true,
About a dog that chanced to break his leg;
His master set it and the member grew
Once more a sound and serviceable peg;
And how d' ye think the happy dog exprest
The grateful feelings of his glowing breast?

XII.

'T was not in words; the customary pay
Of human debtors for a friendly act;
For dogs their thoughts can neither sing nor say
E'en in "dog-latin," which (a curious fact)
Is spoken only — as a classic grace —
By grave Professors of the human race!

XIII.

No, 't was in deed; the very briefest tail
Declared his deep emotions at his cure;
Short, but significant; — one could not fail,
From the mere wagging of his cynosure
("Surgens e *puppi*"), and his ears agog,
To see the fellow was a grateful dog!

XIV.

One day — still mindful of his late disaster —
He wandered off the village to explore;
And brought another dog unto his master,
Lame of a leg, as he had been before;
As who should say, "You see! — the dog is lame:
You doctored me, pray doctor him the same!"

XV.

So runs the story, and you have it cheap, —
Dog-cheap, as doubtless such a tale should be;
The moral, surely, is n't hard to reap: —
Be prompt to listen unto mercy's plea;
The good you get, diffuse; it will not hurt you
E'en from a dog to learn a Christian virtue!

THE JOLLY MARINER.

A BALLAD.

It was a jolly mariner
As ever hove a log;
He wore his trousers wide and free,
And always ate his prog,
And blessed his eyes, in sailor-wise,
And never shirked his grog.

Up spoke this jolly mariner,
Whilst walking up and down: —
"The briny sea has pickled me,
And done me very brown;
But here I goes, in these here clo'es,
A-cruising in the town!"

The first of all the curious things
That chanced his eye to meet,
As this undaunted mariner
Went sailing up the street,
Was, tripping with a little cane,
A dandy all complete!

He stopped, — that jolly mariner, —
And eyed the stranger well: —
"What that may be," he said, says he,
"Is more than I can tell;
But ne'er before, on sea or shore,
Was such a heavy swell!"

He met a lady in her hoops,
And thus she heard him hail: —

"Now blow me tight! but there 's a sight
To manage in a gale!
I never saw so small a craft
With such a spread o' sail!

"Observe the craft before and aft, —
She 'd make a pretty prize!"
And then in that improper way
He spoke about his eyes,
That mariners are wont to use
In anger or surprise.

He saw a plumber on a roof,
Who made a mighty din: —
"Shipmate, ahoy!" the rover cried,
"It makes a sailor grin
To see you copper-bottoming
Your upper decks with tin!"

He met a yellow-bearded man,
And asked about the way;
But not a word could he make out
Of what the chap would say,
Unless he meant to call him names,
By screaming, "Nix furstay!"

Up spoke this jolly mariner,
And to the man said he: —
"I have n't sailed these thirty years
Upon the stormy sea,
To bear the shame of such a name
As I have heard from thee!

"So take thou that!" — and laid him flat;
But soon the man arose,
And beat the jolly mariner
Across his jolly nose,
Till he was fain, from very pain,
To yield him to the blows.

'T was then this jolly mariner,
A wretched jolly tar,
Wished he was in a jolly-boat
Upon the sea afar,
Or riding fast, before the blast,
Upon a single spar!

'T was then this jolly mariner
Returned unto his ship,
And told unto the wondering crew
The story of his trip,
With many oaths and curses, too,
Upon his wicked lip!

As hoping — so this mariner
In fearful words harangued —
His timbers might be shivered, and
His le'ward scuppers danged,
(A double curse, and vastly worse
Than being shot or hanged!)

If ever he — and here again
A dreadful oath he swore —
If ever he, except at sea,
Spoke any stranger more,
Or like a son of — something — went
A-cruising on the shore!

TOM BROWN'S DAY IN GOTHAM.

"Qui mores hominum multorum vidit et *urbem*."

I'LL tell you a story of THOMAS BROWN, —
I don't mean the poet of Shropshire town;
Nor the Scotch Professor of wide renown;
But "Honest Tom Brown"; so called, no doubt,
Because with the same
Identical name,
A good many fellows were roving about
Of whom the sheriff might prudently swear
That "honest" with them was a *non-est* affair!

Now Tom was a Yankee of wealth
and worth,
Who lived and throve by tilling
the earth;
For Tom had wrought
As a farmer ought,
Who, doomed to toil by original
sinning,
Began — like Adam — at the be-
ginning.
He ploughed, he harrowed, and he
sowed;
He drilled, he planted, and he
hoed;
He dug and delved, and reaped and
mowed.
(I wish I could — but I can't — tell
now
Whether he used a subsoil-plough;
Or whether, in sooth, he had ever
seen
A regular reaping and raking ma-
chine.)

He took most pains
With the nobler grains
Of higher value, and finer tissues
Which, possibly, one
Inclined to a pun,
Would call — like *Harper* — his
"*cereal* issues!"
With wheat his lands were all
ablaze;
'T was amazing to look at his fields
of maize;
And there were places
That showed *rye*-faces
As pleasant to see as so many
Graces.
And as for hops,
His annual crops
(So very extensive that, on my soul,
They fairly reached from pole to
pole!)
Would beat the guess of any old
fogie,
Or — the longest season at Sara-
toga!

Whatever seed did most abound,
In the grand result that Autumn
found,
It was his plan,
Though a moderate man,
To be early running it into the
ground;
That is to say,
In another way: —
Whether the seed was barley or
hay,
Large or little, or green or gray, —
Provided only it promised to
"pay," —
He never chose to labor in vain
By stupidly going against the
grain,
But hastened away, without stay
or stop,
And carefully put it into his crop.
And he raised tomatoes
And lots of potatoes,
More sorts, in sooth, than I could
tell;
Turnips, that always turned up
well;
Celery, all that he could sell;
Grapes by the bushel, sour and
sweet;
Beets, that certainly could n't be
beat;
Cabbage — like some sartorial
mound;
Vines, that fairly *cu*-cumbered the
ground;
Some pumpkins — more than he
could house, and
Ten thousand pears; (that 's twen-
ty thousand!)
Fruit of all kinds and propagations,
Baldwins, Pippins, and Carnations,
And apples of other appellations.
To sum it all up in the briefest
space,
As you may suppose, Brown
flourished apace,
Just because he proceeded, I ven-
ture to say,

In the *nulla-retrorsum vestigi*-ous way;
That is — if you 're not University-bred —
He took Crocket's advice about going ahead.
At all the State Fairs he held a fair station,
Raised horses and cows and his own reputation;
Made butter and money; took a Justice's niche;
Grew wheat, wool, and hemp; corn, cattle, and — rich!
But who would be always a country-clown?
And so Tom Brown
Sat himself down
And, knitting his brow in a studious frown,
He said, says he: —
It 's plain to see,
And I think Mrs. B will be apt to agree
(If she don't, it 's much the same to me),
That I, Tom Brown,
Should go to town!
But then, says he, what town shall it be?
Boston-town is consid'rably nearer,
And York is farther, and so will be dearer,
But then, of course, the sights will be queerer;
Besides, I 'm told, you 're surely a lost 'un,
If you once get astray in the streets of Boston.
York is right-angled;
And Boston, right-tangled;
And both, I 've no doubt, are uncommon new-fangled.
Ah! — the "Smiths," I remember, belong to York,
('T-was ten years ago I sold them my pork,)
Good, honest traders — I 'd like to know them —
And so — 't is settled — I 'll go to Gotham!

And so Tom Brown
Sat himself down,
With many a smile and never a frown,
And rode, by rail, to that notable town
Which I really think well worthy of mention
As being America's greatest invention!
Indeed, I 'll be bound that if Nature and Art,
(Though the former, being older, has gotten the start,)
In some new Crystal Palace of suitable size
Should show their *chefs-d'œuvre*, and contend for the prize
The latter would prove, when it came to the scratch,
Whate'er you may think, no contemptible match;
For should old Mrs. Nature endeavor to stagger her
By presenting, at last, her majestic Niagara,
Miss Art would produce an equivalent work
In her great, overwhelming, unfinished New York!

And now Mr. Brown
Was fairly in town,
In that part of the city they used to call "down,"
Not far from the spot of ancient renown
As being the scene
Of the Bowling Green,
A fountain that looked like a huge tureen
Piled up with rocks, and a squirt between;

But the "Bowling" now has gone
where they tally
"The Fall of the Ten," in a neighboring alley;
And as to the "Green" — why,
that you will find
Whenever you see the "invisible"
kind! —
And he stopped at an Inn that 's
known very well,
"Delmonico's" once — now "Steven's Hotel";
(And, to venture a pun which I
think rather witty,
There 's no better Inn in this Innfamous city!)

And Mr. Brown
Strolled up town,
And I 'm going to write his travels
down;
But if you suppose *Tom Brown*
will disclose
The usual sins and follies of those
Who leave rural regions to see
city-shows, —
You could n't well make
A greater mistake;
For Brown was a man of excellent
sense;
Could see very well through a hole
in a ence,
And was honest and plain, without
sham or pretence;
Of sharp city-learning he could n't
have boasted,
But he was n't the chap to be
easily roasted.
And here let me say,
In a very dogmatic, oracular way,
(And I 'll prove it, before I have
done with my lay,)
Not only that honesty 's likely to
"pay,"
But that one must be, as a general
rule,
At least half a knave to be wholly
a fool!

Of pocketbook - dropping Tom
never had heard,
(Or at least if he had, he 'd forgotten the word,)
And now when, at length, the
occasion occurred,
For *that* sort of chaff he was n't
the bird.
The gentleman argued with eloquent force,
And begged him to pocket the
money, of course;
But Brown, without thinking at
all what he said,
Popped out the first thing that
entered his head,
(Which chanced to be wondrously
fitting and true,)
"No, no, my dear Sir, I 'll be
burnt if I do!"
Two lively young fellows, of elegant mien,
Amused him awhile with a pretty
machine, —
An ivory ball, which he never had
seen.
But though the unsuspecting stranger
In the "patent safe" saw no patent
danger,
He easily dodged the nefarious net,
Because "he was n't accustomed
to bet."

Ah! here, I wot,
Is exactly the spot
To make a small fortune as easy as
not!
That man with the watch — what
lungs he has got!
It 's "Going — the best of that
elegant lot —
To close a concern, at a desperate
rate,
The jeweller ruined as certain as
fate!
A capital watch! — you may see
by the weight —

Worth one hundred dollars as easy as eight—
Or half of that sum to melt down into plate—
(Brown does n't know "Peter" from Peter the Great)
But then I can't dwell,
I 'm ordered to sell,
And mus' n't stand weeping—just look at the shell—
I warrant the ticker to operate well—
Nine dollars!—it 's hard to be selling it under
A couple of fifties—it 's cruel, by Thunder!
Ten dollars!—I 'm offered—the man who secures
This splendid—ten dollars!—say twelve, and it 's yours!"
"Don't want it"—quoth Brown—"I don't wish to buy;
Fifty dollars, I 'm sure, one could n't call high—
But to see the man *ruined!*—Dear Sir, I declare—
Between two or three bidders, it does n't seem fair;
To knock it off now were surely a sin;
Just wait, my dear Sir, till the people come in!
Allow me to say, you disgrace your position
As Sheriff—consid'ring the debtor's condition—
To sell *such* a watch without more competition!"
And here Mr. Brown
Gave a very black frown,
Stepped leisurely out, and walked farther up town.
To see him stray along Broadway
In the afternoon of a summer's day,
And note what he chanced to see and say;
And what people he meets
In the narrower streets,
Were a pregnant theme for a longer lay.
How he marvelled at those geological chaps
Who go poking about in crannies and gaps,
Those curious people in tattered breeches,
The rag-wearing, rag-picking sons of—ditches,
Who find in the very nastiest niches
A "decent living," and sometimes riches;
How he thought city prices exceedingly queer,
The 'busses too cheap, and the hacks too dear;
How he stuck in the mud, and got lost in the question—
A problem too hard for his mental digestion—
Why—in cleaning the city, the city employs
Such a very small *corps* of such very small boys;
How he judges by dress, and accordingly makes,
By mixing up classes, the drollest mistakes.
How—as if simple vanity ever were vicious,
Or women of merit could be meretricious,—
He imagines the dashing Fifth-Avenue dames
The same as the girls with unspeakable names!
An exceedingly natural blunder in sooth,
But, I 'm happy to say, very far from the truth;
For e'en at the worst, whate'er you suppose,
The one sort of ladies can *choose* their beaux,
While, as to the other—but every one knows
What—if 't were a secret—I would n't disclose.

And Mr. Brown
Returned from town,
With a bran new hat, and a muslin gown,
And he told the tale, when the sun was down,
How he spent his eagles, and saved his crown;
How he showed his pluck by resisting the claim
Of an impudent fellow who asked his name;
But paid — as a gentleman ever is willing —
At the old Park-Gate, the regular shilling!

YE TAILYOR-MAN.

A CONTEMPLATIVE BALLAD.

RIGHT jollie is ye tailyor-man,
As annie man may be;
And all ye daye upon ye benche
He worketh merrilie.

And oft ye while in pleasante wise
He coileth up his lymbes,
He singeth songs ye like whereof
Are not in Watts his hymns.

And yet he toileth all ye while
His merrie catches rolle;
As true unto ye needle as
Ye needle to ye pole.

What cares ye valiant tailyor-man
For all ye cowarde feares?
Against ye scissors of ye Fates
He pointes his mightie shears.

He heedeth not ye anciente jests
That witiesse sinners use;
What feareth ye bolde tailyor-man
Ye hissinge of a goose?

He pulleth at ye busie threade,
To feede his lovinge wife
And eke his childe; for unto them
It is ye threade of life.

He cutteth well ye riche man's coate,
And with unseemlie pride
He sees ye little waistcoate in
Ye cabbage bye his side.

Meanwhile ye tailyor-man his wife,
To labor nothinge loth,
Sits bye with readie hande to baste
Ye urchin and ye cloth.

Full happie is ye tailyor-man,
Yet is he often tried,
Lest he, from fullnesse of ye dimes,
Wax wanton in his pride.

Full happie is ye tailyor-man,
And yet he hath a foe,
A cunninge enemie that none
So well as tailyors knowe.

It is ye slipperie customer
Who goes his wicked wayes,
And weares ye tailyor-man his coate
But never, never payes!

THE DEVIL OF NAMES.

A LEGEND.

AT an old-fashioned inn, with a pendulous sign,
Once graced with the head of the king of the kine,
But innocent now of the slightest "design,"
Save calling low people to spurious wine, —
While the villagers, drinking, and playing "all fours,"

And cracking small jokes, with vociferous roars,
Were talking of horses, and hunting, and — scores
Of similar topics a bar-room adores,
But which rigid morality greatly deplores,
Till as they grew high in their bacchanal revels,
They fell to discoursing of witches and devils, —
A neat single rap,
Just the ghost of a tap,
That would scarcely have wakened a flea from his nap,
Not at all in its sound like your "Rochester Knocking,"
(Where asses in herds are diurnally flocking,)
But twice as mysterious, and vastly more shocking,
Was heard at the door by the people within,
Who stopped in a moment their clamorous din,
And ceased in a trice from their jokes and their gin;
When who should appear
But an odd-looking stranger somewhat "in the sere,"
(He seemed at the least in his sixtieth year,)
And he limped in a manner exceedingly queer,
Wore breeches uncommonly wide in the rear,
And his nose was turned up with a comical sneer,
And he had in his eye a most villanous leer,
Quite enough to make any one tremble with fear!
Whence he came,
And what was his name,
And what his purpose in venturing out,
And whether his lameness was "gammon" or gout,
Or merely fatigue from strolling about,
Were questions involved in a great deal of doubt, —
When, taking a chair,
With a sociable air,
Like that which your "Uncle" 's accustomed to wear,
Or a broker determined to sell you a share
In his splended "New England Gold-mining" affair,
He opened his mouth and went on to declare
That he was a *devil!* — "The devil you are!"
Cried one of the guests assembled there,
With a sudden start, and a frightened stare!
"Nay, don't be alarmed," the stranger exclaims,
"At the name of the devil, — *I'm the Devil of Names!*
You 'll wonder why
Such a devil as I,
Who ought, you would say, to be devilish shy,
Should venture in here with never a doubt,
And let the best of his secrets out;
But mind you, my boys,
It 's one of the joys
Of the cunningest woman and craftiest man,
To run as quickly as ever they can,
And put a confidante under ban
Not to publish their favorite plan!
And even the de'il
Will sometimes feel
A little of that remarkable zeal,
And (when it 's safe) delights to tell
The very deepest *arcana* of — well; —
Besides, my favor this company wins,
For I value next to capital sins

Those out-and-outers who revel in inns !
So, not to delay,
I 'm going to say,
In the very fullest and frankest way,
All about my honors and claims,
Projects and plans, and objects and aims,
And *why* I 'm called 'The Devil of Names ! '
I cheat by false graces,
And duplicate faces,
And treacherous praises,
And by hiding bad things under plausible phrases!
I 'll give you a sample,
By way of example:
Here 's a bottle before me, will suit to a T
For a nice illustration : this liquor, d' ye see,
Is the water of death, though topers agree
To think it, and drink it, as pure '*eau de vie*';
I know what it is, — that 's sufficient for me!
For the blackest of sins, and crimes, and shames,
I find soft words and innocent names.
The Hells devoted to Satan's games
I christen 'Saloons' and 'Halls,' and then,
By another contrivance of mine again,
They 're only haunted by 'sporting men,' —
A phrase which many a gamester begs,
In spite of the saw that 'eggs is eggs,'
To whiten his nigritudinous legs!

"To debauchees I graciously grant
The favor to be 'a little gallant,'
And soften vicious vagrancy down,
By civilly speaking of 'men about town;'
There 's cheating and lying
In selling and buying,
And all sorts of frauds and dishonest exactions,
I 've brought to the smallest of moral infractions,
Merely by naming them 'business transactions'!
There 's swindling, now, is vastly more fine
As 'Banking,' — a lucky invention of mine,
Worth ten in the *old* diabolical line!

"In lesser matters it 's all the same,
I gain the thing by yielding the name;
It 's really quite the broadest of jokes,
But, on my honor, there 's plenty of folks
So uncommonly fond of verbal cloaks,
They can't enjoy the dinners they eat,
Court the 'muse of the twinkling feet,'
Laugh or sing, or do anything meet
For Christian people, without a cheat
To make their happiness quite complete!
The Boston saints
Are fond of these feints ;
A theatre rouses the loudest complaints,
Till it 's thoroughly purged from pestilent taints,
By the charm of a name and a pious *Te Deum*, —
Yet they patronize actors, and handsomely fee 'em!

Keep (shade of 'the Howards!') a gay 'Athenæum,'
And have, above all, a harmless 'Museum,'
Where folks who love plays may religiously see 'em!

"But leaving a trifle which cost me more trouble
By far than the worth of so flimsy a bubble,
I come to a matter which really claims
The studious care of the Devil of Names.
There 's 'Charity' now —"

But the lecture was done,
Like old Goody Morey's, when scarcely begun;
The devil's discourse by its serious teaching
Had set 'em a-snoring, like regular preaching!
One look of disdain on the sleepers he threw,
As in bitter contempt of the slumbering crew,
And the devil had vanished without more ado, —
A trick, I suspect, that he seldom plays you!

YE PEDAGOGUE:

A BALLAD.

I.

RIGHTE learnéd is ye Pedagogue,
Fulle apt to reade and spelle,
And eke to teache ye parts of speeche,
And strap ye urchins welle.

II.

For as 't is meete to soake ye feete,
Ye ailinge heade to mende,
Ye younker's pate to stimulate,
He beats ye other ende!

III.

Righte lordlie is ye Pedagogue
As any turbaned Turke;
For welle to rule ye District Schoole,
It is no idle worke.

IV.

For oft Rebellion lurketh there
In breaste of secrete foes,
Of malice fulle, in waite to pulle
Ye Pedagogue his nose!

V.

Sometimes he heares with trembling feares,
Of ye ungodlie rogue
On mischieffe bent, with felle intent
To licke ye Pedagogue!

VI.

And if ye Pedagogue be smalle,
When to ye battell led,
In such a plighte, God sende him mighte
To breake ye rogue his heade!

VII.

Daye after daye, for little paye,
He teacheth what he can,
And bears ye yoke, to please ye folke,
And ye Committee-man.

VIII.

Ah! many crosses hath he borne,
And many trials founde,
Ye while he trudged ye district through,
And boarded rounde and rounde!

IX.

Ah! many a steake hath he devoured,
That, by ye taste and sighte,
Was in disdaine, 't was very plaine,
Of Daye his patent righte!

X.

Fulle solemn is ye Pedagogue,
Amonge ye noisy churls,
Yet other while he hath a smile
To give ye handsome girls;

XI.

And one, — ye fayrest mayde of all, —
To cheere his wayninge life,
Shall be, when Springe ye flowers shall bringe,
Ye Pedagogue his wife!

THE STAMMERING WIFE.

I.

When, deeply in love with Miss Emily Cline,
I vowed, if the maiden would only be mine,
I would always endeavor to please her.
She blushed her consent, though the stuttering lass
Said never a word, except "You 're an ass —
An ass — an ass-iduous teaser!"

II.

But when we were married I found to my ruth
The stammering lady had spoken the truth,
For often, in obvious dudgeon,
She 'd say, — if I ventured to give her a jog
In the way of reproof, — "You 're a dog — you 're a dog —
A dog — a dog-matic curmudgeon!"

III.

And once when I said, "We can hardly afford
This extravagant style, with our moderate hoard,
And hinted we ought to be wiser,
She looked, I assure you, exceedingly blue,
And fretfully cried, "You 're a ju — you 're a ju —
A very ju-dicious adviser!"

IV.

Again, when it happened that, wishing to shirk
Some rather unpleasant and arduous work,
I begged her to go to a neighbor,
She wanted to know why I made such a fuss,
And saucily said, "You 're a cus — cus — cus —
You were always ac-cus-tomed to labor!"

V.

Out of temper at last with the insolent dame,
And feeling that Madam was greatly to blame
To scold me instead of caressing,
I mimicked her speech — like a churl as I am —
And angrily said, "You 're a dam — dam — dam —
A dam-age instead of a blessing!"

A RHYMED EPISTLE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE KNICKERBOCKER MAGAZINE.

Dear Knick: While myself and my spouse
Sat tea-ing last evening, and chatting,
And, mindful of conjugal vows,
Were nicely agreed in combating,

It chanced that myself and my wife,
('T was Madam occasioned the pother!)
Falling suddenly into a strife,
Came near falling out with each other!

In a brisk, miscellaneous chat,
Quite in tune with the chime of the tea-things,
We were talking of this and of that,
Just as each of us happened to see things,
When somehow or other it chanced,
(I don't quite remember the cue,)
That as talking and tea-ing advanced,
We found we were talking of you!

I think — but perhaps I am wrong,
Such a subtle old chap is Suggestion,
As he forces each topic along
By the trick of the "previous question" —
Some remarks on a bacchanal revel
Suggested that horrible elf
With the hoof and the horns, — and the Devil,
Excuse me, suggested yourself!

"Ah! Knick, to be sure; by the way,"
Quoth Madam, "what sort of a man
Do you take him to be! — nay, but stay,
And let *me* guess him out if I can.
He 's young, and quite handsome, no doubt;
Rather slender, and not over-tall;
And he loves a snug little turn-out,
And turns out 'quite a love' at a ball!"

And then she went on to portray
Such a very delightful ideal,
That a sensible stranger would say
It really could n't be real.
"And his wife, what a lady must *she* be?
(Knick 's married, that *I* know, and *you* know:)
You 'll find her a delicate Hebe,
And not your magnificent Juno!"

Now I am a man, you must learn,
Less famous for beauty than strength,
And, for aught I could ever discern,
Of rather superfluous length.
In truth 't is but seldom one meets
Such a Titan in human abodes,
And when I stalk over the streets,
I 'm a perfect Colossus of roads!

So I frowned like a tragedy-Roman,
For in painting the beautiful elf
As the form of your lady, the woman
Took care to be drawing herself;
While, mark you, the picture she drew
So deuced *con amore* and free,
That fanciful likeness of you,
Was by no means a portrait of me!

"How lucky for ladies," I hinted,
"That in our republican land
They may prattle, without being stinted,
Of matters they don't understand;
I 'll show you, dear Madam, that 'Knick'
Is n't dapper nor daintily slim,
But a gentleman decently thick,
With a manly extension of limb.

"And as to his youth, — talk of flowers
Blooming gayly in frosty December!
I 'll warrant, his juvenile hours
Are things he can scarcely remember!
Here, Madam, quite plain to be seen,
Is the chap you would choose for a lover!"
And, producing your own Magazine,
I pointed elate to the cover!

"You see, ma'am, 't is just as I said,
His locks are as gray as a rat;
Here, look at the crown of his head,
'T is bald as the crown of my hat!"
"Nay, my dear," interrupted my wife,
Who began to be casting about
To get the last word in the strife,
"'T is his grandfather's picture, no doubt!"

TOWN AND COUNTRY.

AN ECLOGUE.

CLOVERTOP.

I 've thought, my Cousin, it 's extremely queer
That you, who love to spend your August here,
Don't bring, at once, your wife and children down,
And quit, for good, the noisy, dusty town.

SHILLINGSIDE.

Ah! simple swain, this sort of life may do
For such a verdant Clovertop as you,
Content to vegetate in summer air,
And hibernate in winter — like a bear!

CLOVERTOP.

Here we have butter pure as virgin gold,
And milk from cows that can a tail unfold
With bovine pride; and new-laid eggs, whose praise
Is sung by pullets with their morning lays;
Trout from the brook; good water from the well;
And other blessings more than I can tell!

SHILLINGSIDE.

There, simple rustic, we have nightly plays,
And operatic music, — charming ways
Of spending time and money, — lots of fun;
The Central Park — whene'er they get it done;
Barnum's Museum, full of things erratic,
Terrene, amphibious, airy, and aquatic!

CLOVERTOP.

Here we have rosy, radiant, romping girls,
With lips of rubies, and with teeth of pearls;
I dare not mention half their witching charms;
But, ah! the roundness of their milky arms,
And, oh! what polished shoulders they display,
Bending o'er tubs upon a washing-day!

SHILLINGSIDE.

There we have ladies most superbly made
(By fine *artistes*, who understand their trade),
Who dance the German, flirt a graceful fan,
And speak *such* French as no Parisian can;
Who sing much louder than your country thrushes,
And wear (thank Phalon!) far more brilliant blushes!

CLOVERTOP.

Here, boastful Shilling, we have flowery walks,
Where you may stroll, and hold delightful talks,
(No saucy placard frowning as you pass,
"Ten dollars' fine for walking on the grass!")
Dim-lighted groves, where love's delicious words
Are breathed to music of melodious birds.

SHILLINGSIDE.

There, silly Clover, dashing belles we meet,
Sweeping with silken robes the dusty street;
May gaze into their faces as they pass,
Beneath the rays of dimly burning gas,
Or, standing at a crossing when it rains,
May see some pretty ankles for our pains.

CLOVERTOP.

Here you may angle for the speckled trout,
Play him awhile, with gentle hand, about,
Then, like a sportsman, pull the fellow out!

SHILLINGSIDE.

There too, is fishing quite as good, I ween,
Where careless, gaping gudgeons oft are seen,
Rich as yon pasture, and almost as green!

CLOVERTOP.

Here you may see the meadow's grassy plain,
Ripe, luscious fruits, and shocks of golden grain;
And view, luxuriant in a hundred fields,
The gorgeous wealth that bounteous Nature yields!

SHILLINGSIDE.

There you may see Trade's wondrous strength and pride,
Where merchant-navies throng on every side,
And view, collected in Columbia's mart,
Alike the wealth of Nature and of Art!

CLOVERTOP.

Cease, clamorous cit! I love these quiet nooks,
Where one may sleep, or dawdle over books,
Or, if he wish of gentle love to dream,
May sit and muse by yonder babbling stream —

SHILLINGSIDE.

Dry up your babbling stream! my Clovertop —
You 're getting garrulous; it 's time to stop.
I love the city, and the city's smoke;
The smell of gas; the dust of coal and coke;
The sound of bells; the tramp of hurrying feet;

The sight of pigs and Paphians in the street;
The jostling crowd; the never-ceasing noise
Of rattling coaches, and vociferous boys;
The cry of "Fire!" and the exciting scene
Of heroes running with their mad "mersheen";
Nay, now I think that I could even stand
The direful din of Barnum's brazen band,
So much I long to see the town again!
Good by! I 'm going by the evening train!
Don't fail to call whene'er you come to town,
We 'll do the city, boy, and do it brown;
I 've really had a pleasant visit here,
And mean to come again another year.

THE FAMILY MAN.

I once was a jolly young beau,
And knew how to pick up a fan,
But I 've done with all that, you must know,
For now I 'm a family man!

When a partner I ventured to take,
The ladies all favored the plan;
They vowed I was certain to make
"Such an excellent family man!"

If I travel by land or by water,
I have charge of some Susan or Ann;
Mrs. Brown is so sure that her daughter
Is safe with a family man!

The trunks and the bandboxes round 'em
With something like horror I scan,
But though I may mutter, "Confound 'em!"
I smile — like a family man!

I once was as gay as a templar,
But levity 's now under ban;
Young people must have an exemplar,
And I am a family man!

The club-men I meet in the city
All treat me as well as they can;
And only exclaim, "What a pity
Poor Tom is a family man!"

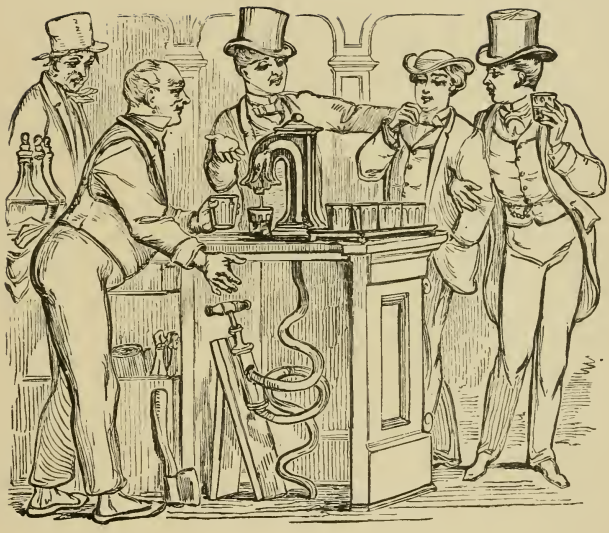
I own I am getting quite pensive;
Ten children, from David to Dan,
Is a family rather extensive;
But then — I 'm a family man!

THE SNAKE IN THE GLASS.

A HOMILY.

Come listen awhile to me, my lad;
Come listen to me for a spell;
Let that terrible drum
For a moment be dumb,
For your uncle is going to tell
What befell
A youth who loved liquor too well.

A clever young man was he, my lad;
And with beauty uncommonly blest,
Ere, with brandy and wine,
He began to decline,
And behaved like a person possessed;
I protest
The temperance plan is the best.



One evening he went to a tavern,
my lad;
He went to a tavern one night,
And drinking too much
Rum, brandy, and such,
The chap got exceedingly "tight";
And was quite
What your aunt would entitle a
fright.

The fellow fell into a snooze, my
lad;
'T is a horrible slumber he takes;
He trembles with fear,
And acts very queer;
My eyes! how he shivers and
shakes
When he wakes,
And raves about horrid great
snakes!

'T is a warning to you and to me,
my lad;
A particular caution to all, —
Though no one can see
The vipers but he, —
To hear the poor lunatic bawl: —
"How they crawl! —
All over the floor and the wall!"

Next morning he took to his bed,
my lad;
Next morning he took to his bed;
And he never got up
To dine or to sup,
Though properly physicked and
bled;
And I read,
Next day, the poor fellow was
dead!

You 've heard of the snake in the
grass, my lad;
Of the viper concealed in the grass;
But now, you must know,
Man's deadliest foe
Is a snake of a different class;
Alas! —
'T is the viper that lurks in the
glass!

A warning to you and to me, my
lad;
A very imperative call: —
Of liquor keep clear;
Don't drink even beer,
If you 'd shun all occasion to fall;
If at all,
Pray take it uncommonly small.

And if you are partial to snakes,
my lad
(A passion I think rather low),
Don't enter, to see 'em,
The *Devil's Museum!* —
'T is very much better to go
(That 's so!)
And visit a regular show!

NE CREDE COLORI:

OR, TRUST NOT TO APPEARANCES.

THE musty old maxim is wise,
Although with antiquity hoary;
What an excellent homily lies
In the motto, *Ne crede colori!*

A blustering minion of Mars
Is vaunting his battles so gory;
You see some equivocal scars,
And mutter, *Ne crede colori!*

A fellow solicits your tin
By telling a runaway story;
You look at his ebony skin,
And think of, *Ne crede colori!*

You gaze upon beauty that vies
With the rose and the lily in
glory,
But certain "inscrutable dyes"
Remind you, *Ne crede colori!*

There 's possibly health in the flush
That rivals the red of Aurora;
But brandy-and-water can blush,
And whisper, *Ne crede colori!*

My story is presently done,
Like the ballad of good Mother Morey;
But all imposition to shun,
Remember, *Ne crede colori!*

CLARA TO CLOE.

AN EPISTLE FROM A CITY LADY TO A COUNTRY COUSIN.

DEAR CLOE: — I 'm deeply your debtor
(Though the mail was uncommonly slow)
For the very agreeable letter
You wrote me a fortnight ago.
I know you are eagerly waiting
For all that I promised to write,
But my pen is unequal to stating
One half that my heart would indite.

The weather is terribly torrid;
And writing 's a serious task;
The new style of bonnet is horrid;
And so is the new-fashioned *basque;*
The former — but language would fail
Were its epithets doubly as strong —
The latter is worn with a tail
Very ugly and tediously long!

And then as to *crinoline* — Gracious!
If you only could see Cousin Ruth!
The pictures, for once, are veracious,
And editors utter the truth!
I know you will think it a pity;
And every one makes such a sneer of it;
But there is n't a saint in the city
Whose skirts are entirely clear of it!

And then what a fortune of stuff
To cover the skeleton over! —
Charles says the idea is enough
To frighten a sensible lover;
And, pretending that *we* are to blame
For every financial declension,
Swears husbands must soon do the same,
If wives have another "extension"!

The town is exceedingly dull,
And so is the latest new farce;
The parks are uncommonly full,
But beaux are deplorably scarce;
They 're gone to the "Springs" and the "Falls,"
To exhibit their greyhounds and graces,
And recruit at — what Frederick calls —
The Brandy-and-Watering Places!

Since my former epistle, which carried
The news of that curious plot, —
Of Miss S. who ran off — and was married;
Of Miss B. who ran off — and was not, —
There is n't a whisper of scandal
To keep gentle ladies in humor,
And Gossip, the pleasant old Vandal,
Is dying for want of a rumor!

CLARA.

P. S. — But was n't it funny? —
Mrs. Jones, at a party last week,
(The lady so proud of her money,
Of whom you have oft heard me speak,)

Appeared so delightfully stupid,
When she spoke, through the squeak of her phthisic,
Of the statue of Psyche and Cupid
As "the *statute of Cuppid and Physic*"! C.

CLOE TO CLARA.

A SARATOGA LETTER.

DEAR CLARA: — I wish you were here:
The prettiest spot upon earth!
With everything charming, my dear, —
Beaux, badinage, music, and mirth!
Such rows of magnificent trees,
Overhanging such beautiful walks,
Where lovers may stroll, if they please,
And indulge in the sweetest of talks!

We go every morning, like geese,
To drink at the favorite Spring;
Six tumblers of water apiece
Is simply the regular thing;
For such is its wonderful virtue,
Though rather unpleasant at first,
No quantity ever can hurt you,
Unless you should happen to burst!

And then, what a gossipping sight!
What talk about William and Harry;
How Julia was spending last night;
And *why* Miss Morton should marry!
Dear Clara, I 've happened to see
Full many a tea-table slaughter;
But, really, scandal with tea
Is nothing to scandal with water!

Apropos of the Spring — have you heard
The quiz of a gentleman here
On a pompous M. C. who averred
That the *name* was remarkably queer?
"The Spring — to keep it from failing —
With wood is encompassed about,
And derives, from its permanent *railing*,
The title of 'Congress,' no doubt!"

'T is pleasant to guess at the reason,
The genuine motive, which brings
Such all-sorts of folks, in the season,
To stop a few days at the Springs.
Some come to partake of the waters
(The sensible, old-fashioned elves);
Some come to dispose of their daughters,
And some to dispose of — themselves!

Some come to exhibit their faces
To new and admiring beholders;
Some come to exhibit their graces,
And some to exhibit their shoulders;
Some come to make people stare
At the elegant dresses they 've got;
Some to show what a lady may wear,
And some — what a lady should not!

Some come to squander their treasure,
And some their funds to improve;

And some for mere love of pleasure,
And some for the pleasure of love;
And some to escape from the old,
And some to see what is new;
But most — it is plain to be told —
Come here — because other folks do!

And that, I suppose, is the reason
Why *I* am enjoying, to-day,
What 's called "the height — of the season"
In rather the loftiest way.
Good by — for now I must stop —
To Charley's command I resign, —
So I 'm his for the regular hop,
But ever most tenderly thine,
CLOE.

THE GREAT MAGICIAN.

ONCE, when a lad, it was my hap
To gain my mother's kind permission
To go and see a foreign chap
Who called himself "The Great Magician";
I recollect his wondrous skill
In divers mystic conjurations,
And how the fellow wrought at will
The most prodigious transformations.

I recollect the nervous man
Within whose hat the great deceiver
Broke eggs, as in a frying-pan,
And took 'em smoking from the beaver!
I recollect the lady's shawl
Which the magician rent asunder,
And then restored; but, best of all,
I recollect the Ribbon-wonder!

I mean, of course, the funny freak
In which the wizard, at his pleasure,
Spins lots of ribbons from his cheek
(Where he had hid 'em, at his leisure).
Yard after yard, of every hue,
Comes blazing out, and still the fellow
Keeps spinning ribbons, red and blue,
And black, and white, and green, and yellow!

I ne'er shall see another show
To rank with the immortal "Potter's";[3]
He 's dead and buried long ago,
And others charm our sons and daughters;
Years — years have fled — alas! how quick,
Since I beheld the Great Magician,
And yet I 've seen the Ribbon-Trick
In many a curious repetition!

Thus, when an author I have read
Who much amazed the world of letters
With gems his fluent pen has shed,
(All nicely pilfered from his betters,)
Presto! — 't is done! — and all complete,
As in my youth's enraptured vision,
I 've seen again the Ribbon-Feat,
And thought about the Great Magician!

So, when a sermon I have heard
Made up of bits of borrowed learning,

Some cheap mosaic which has stirred
The wonder of the undiscerning,
Swift as a flash has memory then
Recalled the ancient exhibition;
I saw the Ribbon-Trick again,
And thought about the Great Magician!

So when some flippant man-o'-jokes,
Though in himself no dunce was duller,
Has dazzled all the simple folks
With brilliant jests of every color,
I 've whispered thus (while fast and thick
The changes flashed across my vision): —
"How well he plays the Ribbon-Trick!
By Jove! he beats the Great Magician."

I ne'er shall see another show
To rank with the immortal "Potter's";
He 's dead and buried long ago,
And others charm our sons and daughters;
Years, years have fled — alas! how quick,
Since I beheld the Great Magician,
And yet I 've seen the Ribbon-Trick
In many a curious repetition!

THE BLARNEY STONE.

I.

In Blarney Castle, on a crumbling tower,
There lies a stone (above your ready reach),
Which to the lips imparts, 't is said, the power
Of facile falsehood, and persuasive speech;
And hence, of one who talks in such a tone,
The peasants say, "He 's kissed the Blarney Stone!"

II.

Thus, when I see some flippant tourist swell
With secrets wrested from an Emperor,
And hear him vaunt his bravery, and tell
How once he snubbed a Marquis, I infer
The man came back — if but the truth were known —
By way of Cork, and kissed the Blarney Stone!

III.

So, when I hear a shallow dandy boast
(In the long ear that marks a brother dunce)
What precious favors ladies' lips have lost,
To his advantage, I suspect, at once,
The fellow 's lying; that the dog alone
(Enough for him!) has kissed the Blarney Stone!

IV.

When some fine lady, — ready to defame
An absent beauty, with as sweet a grace, —
With seeming rapture greets a hated name,
And lauds her rival to her wondering face;

E'en Charity herself must freely own
Some women, too, have kissed the Blarney Stone!

V.

When sleek attorneys, whose seductive tongues,
Smooth with the unction of a golden fee,
"Breathe forth huge falsehoods from capacious lungs" *
(The words are Juvenal's), 't is plain to see
A lawyer's genius is n't all his own;
The specious rogue has kissed the Blarney Stone!

VI.

When the false pastor, from his fainting flock
Withholds the Bread of Life, the Gospel news,
To give them dainty words, lest he should shock
The fragile fabric of the paying pews,
Who but must feel, the man, to Grace unknown,
Has kissed, — not Calvary, — but the Blarney Stone!

ODE TO THE PRINCE OF WALES.

INVITING HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS TO A COUNTRY COTTAGE.

O PRINCE of Wales!
Unless my judgment fails,
You 've found your recent travel rather dreary;
I don't expect an answer to the query, —
But are n't you getting weary?
Weary of Bells, and Balls, and grand Addresses?
Weary of Military and their messes?
Weary of adulation and caresses?
Weary of shouts from the admiring masses?
Weary of worship from the upper classes?
Weary of horses, may'rs, and asses?
Of course 't was kindly meant, —
But don't you now repent
Your good Mamma's consent
That you should *be*,
This side the sea,
The "British *Lion*" which you represent?
Pray leave your city courtiers and their capers,
And come to us: we 've no pictorial papers;
And no Reporters to distort your nose;
Or mark the awkward carriage of your toes;
Your style of sneezing, and such things as those;
Or, meaner still, in democratic spite,
Measure your Royal Highness by your height!

Then come to us!
We 're not the sort of folk to make a fuss,
E'en for the PRESIDENT; but then, my boy,
We plumply promise you a special joy,
To Princes rarely known,
And one you 'll never find about a throne,
To wit, the bliss of being *let alone!*

* "Immensa cavi spirant mendacia folles."

No scientific bores from Athenæ-
ums;
No noisy guns, nor tedious *te-*
deums,
Shall vex your Royal Highness for
a minute;
A glass of lemonade, with "some-
thing in it,"
A fragrant meerschaum, with the
morning news,
Or sweet Virginia "fine-cut," if
you choose, —
These, and what else your High-
ness may demand
Of simple luxury, shall be at hand,
And at your royal service. *Come!*
O come where you may gain
(What advertisers oft have sought
in vain)
"The comforts of a home"!
Come, Prince of Wales! we
greatly need
Your royal presence, Sir, — we do
indeed:
For why? we have a pretty ham-
let here,
But then, you see, 't is equally as
clear
(Your Highness understands
Shakesperian hints)
A *Hamlet* is n't much without a
Prince!

MOTHERS-IN-LAW.

If you ever should marry, said
Major McGarth,
While smoking a pipe by my
bachelor-hearth,
If you ever should wed, — and I
would n't employ
A word to prevent it, my broth of
a boy, —
Remember that wedlock 's a com-
pany where
The parties, quite often, are more
than a pair;
'T is a lott'ry in which you are
certain to draw
A wife, and, most likely, a mother-
in-law!

What the latter may be all con-
jecture defies:
She is never a blank; she is seldom
a prize;
Sometimes she is silly; sometimes
she is bold;
Sometimes—rather worse!—she 's
a virulent scold.
You dreamed of an angel to gladden
your home,
And with her — God help you! —
a harpy has come;
You fished for a wife without fail-
ing or flaw,
And find you have netted — a
mother-in-law!

"Dear Anna," she says, "as you
clearly may see,
Has always been used to depending
on me;
Poor child! though the gentlest
that ever was known,
She could never be trusted a mo-
ment alone;
Such sensitive nerves, and such
delicate lungs!"
Cries the stoutest of dames with
the longest of tongues.
"Like mother like child; you re-
member the saw;
I 'm weakly myself," says your
mother-in-law!

But your mother-in-law, you dis-
cover erelong,
Though feeble in body, in temper
is strong;
And so you surrender, — what else
can you do?

She governs your wife, and your servants, and you;
And calls you a savage, the coarsest of brutes,
For trampling the carpet with mud on your boots;
And vows she committed a stupid "*fox-paw*"
In rashly becoming your mother-in-law!

And so, said the Major, pray, let me advise
The carefullest use of your ears and your eyes;
And, *ceteris paribus*, take you a maid
(Of widows, my boy, I am something afraid!)
Who gives you — the darling! — her hand and her love,
With a sigh for her "dear sainted mother above!"
From which the conclusion you safely may draw,
She will never appear as your mother-in-law!

NIL ADMIRARI.

I.

When Horace in Vendusian groves
Was scribbling wit or sipping "Massic,"
Or singing those delicious loves
Which after ages reckon classic,
He wrote one day — 't was no vagary —
These famous words: — *Nil admirari!*

II.

"Wonder at nothing!" said the bard;
A kingdom's fall, a nation's rising,
A lucky or a losing card,
Are really not at all surprising;
However men or manners vary,
Keep cool and calm; *Nil admirari!*

III.

If kindness meet a cold return;
If friendship prove a dear delusion;
If love, neglected, cease to burn,
Or die untimely of profusion, —
Such lessons well may make us wary,
But need n't shock; *Nil admirari!*

IV.

Does disappointment follow gain?
Or wealth elude the keen pursuer?
Does pleasure end in poignant pain?
Does fame disgust the lucky wooer,
Or haply prove perversely chary?
'T was ever thus; *Nil admirari!*

V.

Does January wed with May,
Or ugliness consort with beauty?
Does Piety forget to pray?
And, heedless of connubial duty,
Leave faithful Ann for wanton Mary?
'T is the old tale; *Nil admirari!*

VI.

Ah! when the happy day we reach
When promisers are ne'er deceivers;
When parsons practise what they preach,
And seeming saints are all believers,
Then the old maxim you may vary,
And say no more, *Nil admirari!*

THE COQUETTE.

A PORTRAIT.

"You 're clever at drawing, I own,"
Said my beautiful cousin Lisette,
As we sat by the window alone,
"But say, can you paint a Coquette?"

"She 's painted already," quoth I;
"Nay, nay!" said the laughing Lisette,
"Now none of your joking, — but try
And paint me a thorough Coquette."

"Well, cousin," at once I began
In the ear of the eager Lisette,
"I 'll paint you as well as I can
That wonderful thing, a Coquette.

"She wears a most beautiful face,"
("Of course!" said the pretty Lisette,)
"And is n't deficient in grace,
Or else she were not a Coquette.

"And then she is daintily made"
(A smile from the dainty Lisette)
"By people expert in the trade
Of forming a proper Coquette.

"She 's the winningest ways with the beaux,"
("Go on!" — said the winning Lisette,)
"But there is n't a man of them knows
The mind of the fickle Coquette!

"She knows how to weep and to sigh,"
(A sigh from the tender Lisette,)
"But her weeping is all in my eye, —
Not that of the cunning Coquette!

"In short, she 's a creature of art,"
("O hush!" said the frowning Lisette,)
"With merely the ghost of a heart, —
Enough for a thorough Coquette.

"And yet I could easily prove"
("Now don't!" said the angry Lisette,)
"The lady is always in love, —
In love with herself, — the Coquette!

"There, — do not be angry! — you know,
My dear little cousin Lisette,
You told me a moment ago
To paint *you* — a thorough Coquette!"

CARMEN LÆTUM:

RECITED, AFTER DINNER, BEFORE THE ALUMNI OF MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE, AT THEIR SEMI-CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION, AUGUST 22, 1850.

A RIGHT loving welcome, my true-hearted Brothers,
Who have come out to visit the kindest of mothers;
You may think as you will, but there is n't a doubt
Alma Mater rejoices, and knows you are out!
Rejoices to see you in gratitude here,

Returning to honor her fiftieth year.
And while the good lady is so overcome
With maternal emotion, she 's stricken quite dumb,
(A thing, I must own, that 's enough to perplex
A shallow observer, who thinks that the sex,
Whatever may be their internal revealings,
Can never be pained with unspeakable feelings,)
Indulge me, dear Brothers, nor think me ill-bred,
If I venture a moment to speak in her stead.
I, who, though the humblest and homeliest one,
Feel the natural pride of a dutiful son,
And esteem it to-day the profoundest of joys,
That, not less than yourselves, I am one of the boys!

First as to her health, which, I 'm sorry to say,
Has been better, no doubt, than she finds it to-day;
Yet when you reflect she 's been somewhat neglected,
She 's really as well as could well be expected;
And, spite of ill-treatment and permature fears,
Is a hearty old lady, for one of her years.
Indeed, I must tell you a bit of a tale,
To show you she 's feeling remarkably hale;
How she turned up her nose, but a short time ago,
At a rather good-looking importunate beau,
And how she refused, with a princess-like carriage
"A very respectable offer of marriage." *

You see, my dear Brothers, a neighboring College
Who values himself on the depth of his knowledge,
With a prayer for her love, and an eye to her land,
Walked up to the lady and offered his hand.
For a minute or so she was all in a flutter,
And had not a word she could audibly utter;
For she felt in her bosom, beyond all concealing,
A kind of a — sort of a — widow-like feeling!
But recovering soon from the delicate shock,
She held up her head like an old-fashioned clock,
And, with proper composure, went on and defined,
In suitable phrases, the state of her mind;
Said she would n't mind changing her single condition,
Could she fairly expect to improve her position;
And thus, by some words of equivocal scope,
Gave her lover decided "permission to hope."
It were idle to talk of the billing and cooing
The amorous gentleman used in his wooing;

* Allusion is had, in this and subsequent lines, to an unsuccessful attempt to unite Middlebury College with the University of Vermont. The affair is here treated with the license of a dinner poem, and with the partiality permitted to the occasion.

Or how she replied to his pressing advances,
His oscular touches and ocular glances; —
'T is enough that his courtship, by all that is known,
Was quite the old story, and much like your own!

Thus the matter went on, till the lady found out,
One very fine day, what the rogue was about, —
That all that he wanted was merely that power
By marital license to pocket her dower,
And then to discard her in sorrow and shame,
Bereaved of her home and her name and her fame.
In deep indignation she turned on her heel,
With such withering scorn as a lady might feel
For a knave, who, in stealing her miniature case,
Should take the gold setting, and leave her the face!
But soon growing calm as the breast of the deep,
When the breezes are hushed that the waters may sleep,
She sat in her chair, like a dignified elf,
And thus, while I listened, she talked to herself: —
"Nay, 't was idle to think of so foolish a plan
As a match with this pert University-man,
For I have n't a chick but would redden with shame
At the very idea of my losing my name;
And would feel that no sorrow so heavy could come
To his mother as losing her excellent home.
'T is true I am weak, but my children are strong,
And won't see me suffer privation or wrong;
So, away with the dream of connubial joys,
I 'll stick to the homestead, and look to the boys!"

How joyous, my friends, is the cordial greeting
Which gladdens the heart at a family meeting;
When brothers assemble at Friendship's old shrine
To look at the present, and talk of "Lang Syne"!
Ah! well I remember the halcyon years,
Too earnest for laughter, too pleasant for tears,
When life was a boon in yon classical court,
Though lessons were long, and though commons were short!
Ah! well I remember those excellent men,
Professors and tutors, who reigned o'er us then;
Who guided our feet over Science's bogs,
And led us quite safe through Philosophy's fogs.
Ah! well I remember the President's * face,
As he sat at the lecture with dignified grace,
And neatly unfolded the mystical themes
Of various deep metaphysical schemes, —
How he brightened the path of his studious flock,

* Joshua Bates, D. D.

As he gave them a key to that wonderful *Locke;*
How he taught us to feel it was fatal indeed
With too much reliance to lean upon *Reid;*
That *Stewart* was sounder, but wrong at the last,
From following his master a little too fast. —
Then closed the discourse in a scholarly tone,
With a clear and intelligent creed of his own.
That the man had his faults it were safe to infer, —
Though I really don't recollect what they were, —
I barely remember this one little truth,
When his case was discussed by the critical youth,
The Seniors and Freshmen were sure to divide,
And the former were all on the President's side!

And well I remember another, whose praise
Were a suitable theme for more elegant lays;
But even in numbers ungainly and rough,
I must mention the name of our glorious HOUGH!
Who does not remember? for who can forget,
Till Memory's star shall forever have set,
How he sat in his place unaffected and bold,
And taught us more truths than the lesson had told?
Gave a lift to "Old NOL," for the love of the right,
And a slap at the Stuarts, with cordial spite;
And, quite in the teeth of conventional rules,
Hurled his adjectives down upon tyrants and fools?
But, chief, he excelled in his proper vocation
Of giving the classics a classic translation;
In Latin and Greek he was almost oracular,
And, what 's more to his praise, understood the vernacular.
O, 't was pleasant to hear him make English of Greek,
Till you felt that no tongue was inherently weak;
While Horace in Latin seemed quite understated,
And rejoiced like old Enoch in being translated!

And others there were — but the hour would fail,
To bring them all up in historic detail;
And yet I would give, ere the moment has fled,
A sigh for the absent, a tear for the dead.
There 's not one of them all, where-e'er he may rove,
In the shadows of earth, or the glories above,
In the home of his birth, or in lands far away,
But comes back to be kindly remembered to-day!

One little word more, and my duty is done; —
A health to our Mother, from each mother's son!
Unfading in beauty, increasing in strength,
May she flourish in health through the century's length;

And next when her children come
round her to boast,
May *Esto perpetua* then be the
toast!

MY BOYHOOD.

Ah me! those joyous days are gone!
I little dreamt, till they were flown,
How fleeting were the hours!
For, lest he break the pleasing
spell,
Time bears for youth a muffled
bell,
And hides his face in flowers!

Ah! well I mind me of the days,
Still bright in memory's flattering
rays,
When all was fair and new;
When knaves were only found in
books,
And friends were known by friendly looks,
And love was always true!

While yet of sin I scarcely
dreamed,
And everything was what it
seemed,
And all too bright for choice;
When fays were wont to guard
my sleep,
And *Crusoe* still could make me
weep,
And *Santa Claus*, rejoice!

When Heaven was pictured to my
thought
(In spite of all my mother taught
Of happiness serene)
A theatre of boyish plays, —
One glorious round of holidays,
Without a school between!

Ah me! those joyous days are gone;
I little dreamt, till they were flown,
How fleeting were the hours!
For, lest he break the pleasing
spell,
Time bears for youth a muffled
bell,
And hides his face in flowers!

POST-PRANDIAL VERSES.

RECITED AT THE FESTIVAL OF THE PSI UPSILON FRATERNITY, IN BOSTON, JULY 21, 1853.

Dear Brothers, who sit at this
bountiful board,
With excellent viands so lavishly
stored
That, in newspaper phrase, 't would
undoubtedly *groan*,
If groaning were but a convivial
tone,
Which it is n't, — and therefore,
by sympathy led,
The table, no doubt, is rejoicing
instead.
Dear Brothers, I rise, — and it
won't be surprising
If you find me, like bread, all the
better for rising, —
I rise to express my exceeding
delight
In our cordial reunion this glorious
night!

Success to "Psi Upsilon!" —
Beautiful name! —
To the eye and the ear it is pleasant
the same;
Many thanks to old Cadmus who
made us his debtors,
By inventing, one day, those capital letters
Which still, from the heart, we
shall know how to speak
When we 've fairly forgotten the
rest of our Greek!

To be open and honest in all that you do;
To every high trust to be faithful and true;
In aught that concerns morality's scheme,
To be more ambitious to *be* than to *seem*;
To cultivate honor as higher in worth
Than favor of fortune, or genius, or birth;
By every endeavor to render your lives
As spotless and fair as your — possible wives;
To treat with respect all the innocent rules
That keep us at peace with society's fools;
But to face every *canon* that e'er was designed
To batter a town or beleaguer a mind,
Ere you yield to the Moloch that Fashion has reared
One jot of your freedom, or hair of your beard, —
All this, and much more, I might venture to teach,
Had I only a "call" — and a "license to preach";
But since I have not, to my modesty true,
I 'll lay it all by, as a layman should do,
And drop a few lines, tipt with Momus's flies,
To angle for shiners — that lurk in your eyes!

May you ne'er get in love or in debt with a doubt
As to whether or no you will ever get out;
May you ne'er have a mistress who plays the coquette,
Or a neighbor who blows on a cracked clarionet;
May you learn the first use of a lock on your door,
And ne'er, like Adonis, be killed by a bore;
Shun canting and canters with resolute force;
(A "canter" is shocking, except in a horse;)
At jovial parties mind what you are at,
Beware of your head and take care of your hat,
Lest you find that a favorite son of your mother
Has a brick in the one and an ache in the other;
May you never, I pray, to worry your life,
Have a weak-minded friend, or a strong-minded wife;
A tailor distrustful, or partner suspicious;
A dog that is rabid, or nag that is vicious;
Above all — the chief blessing the gods can impart —
May you keep a clear head and a generous heart;
Remember 't is blessed to give and forgive;
Live chiefly to love, and love while you live;
And dying, when life's little journey is done,
May your last, fondest sigh, be *PSI* UPSILON!

THE SILVER WEDDING.

TO JOHN NEWMAN, D. D.

"A WEDDING of Silver! — and what shall we do?"
I said in response to my excellent spouse,

Who hinted, this morning, we ought
to renew,
According to custom, our conjugal vows.

"I would n't much mind it, now —
if — and suppose —
The bride were a blooming —
Ah! well — on my life,
I think — to be candid — (don't
turn up your nose!)
That every new wedding should
bring a new wife!"

"And what if it should?" was the
laughing reply;
"Do you think, my dear John,
you could ever obtain
Another so fond and so faithful as I,
Should you purchase a wig, and
go courting again?"

"Ah! darling," I answered, "'t is
just as you say";
And clasping a waist rather
shapely than small
I kissed the dear girl in so ardent
a way
You would n't have guessed we
were married at all!

My wedding-day, Doctor, is also
your own!
And so I send greeting to bride-
groom and bride, —
The latter a wife good as ever was
known;
The former well worthy her homage and pride.

God bless your new nuptials! —
Still happy at home,
May you both grow serenely and
gracefully old;
And, till the auriferous wedding
shall come,
Find the years that are past were
as silver to gold!

September 9, 1866.

LOOKING OUT INTO THE NIGHT.

LOOKING out into the night,
I behold in space afar
Yonder beaming, blazing star;
And I marvel at the might
Of the Giver of the rays,
And I worship as I gaze,
Looking out into the night.

Looking out into the night,
I espy two lovers near,
And their happy words I hear,
While their solemn troth they
plight;
And I bless the loving twain,
Half in pleasure, half in pain, —
Looking out into the night.

Looking out into the night,
Lo! a woman passing by,
Glancing round with anxi
eye,
Tearful, fearful of the light;
And I think what migh
been
But for treachery and s
Looking out into the nigh

Looking out into the n
I behold a distant s
Roughly beaten b
Till it vanishes fro
And I ponder o
Of our fleetin
Looking out ir

Looking out into the night,
I bethink me of the rest
And the rapture of the blest
In the land where all is light;
Sitting on the heavenly shore,
Weeping never, — nevermore
"Looking out into the night!"

THE OLD YEAR AND THE NEW.

Good by, Old Year! I can but say,
Sadly I see thee passing away;
Passing away with the hopes and fears,
The bliss and pain, the smiles and tears,
That come to us all in all the years.

Good by, Old Year! Little indeed
Thy friendly voice we were wont to heed,
Telling us, warning us every day: —
"Transient mortals! work and pray;
You, like me, are passing away!"

›od by, Old Year! Whatever may be
sins and stains thou hast chanced to see,
ider, O Year! to purge the ame,
wash away the sin and me,
thou wert passing, STMAS came!

Year! With words

who takes thy

And say, Old Year, unto the New,
"Kindly, carefully, carry them through,
For much, I ween, they have yet to do!"

DE MUSA.

"Write a poem — solemn — earnest —
Worthy of your muse!"
Ah! when loving lips command me,
How can I refuse?
But the subject! — that 's the pother —
What am I to choose?

War? The theme is something hackneyed;
Since old Homer's time,
Half the minstrels, large and little,
Have been making rhyme
With intent to prove that murder
(Wholesale) is sublime!

Love? A most delicious topic;
But how many score,
Nay, how many thousand poets
Deal in Cupid's lore,
From *Anacreon* to *Catullus*,
Not to mention *Moore*.

Grief? Ah! little joy has Sorrow
In the mimic art;
Can the lyre's melodious moaning
Ease the mourner's smart,
Though the strings were very fibres
Of the player's heart?

Nature, — posies, woods and waters?
Everlasting themes, —

Can the poets, in the rapture
  Of their finest dreams,
Paint the lily of the valley
  Fairer than she seems?

Metaphysics? Quite in fashion, —
  But Apollo's curse
Blasts the syllogistic rhymer;
  Why should I rehearse
Kant in cantos, or old *Plato*
  Torture into verse?

Humor, satire, fun and fancy,
  Wit with wisdom blent, —
These, to give my Muse amusement,
  Heaven has kindly lent;
Let her live and die a-laughing,
  I shall be content!

AUGUSTA.

"Incedit regina!"

"HANDSOME and haughty!" — a comment that came
  From lips which were never accustomed to malice;
A girl with a presence superb as her name,
  And charmingly fitted for love — in a palace!
And oft I have wished (for in musing alone
  One's fancy is apt to be very erratic)
That the lady might wear — No! I never will own
  A thought so decidedly undemocratic! —
But *if* 't were a *coronet* — this I 'll aver,
  No duchess on earth could more gracefully wear it;
And even a democrat, thinking of *her*,
  Might surely be pardoned for wishing to share it!

ROGER BONTEMPS.

IMITATED FROM BÉRANGER.

I.

BY way of good example
  To all the gloomy clan,
There came into existence
  Good Robin Merryman.
To laugh at those who grumble,
  And be jolly as he can, —
O that 's the only system
  Of Robin Merryman!

II.

A hat so very ancient
  It might have covered Moses,
Adorned, on great occasions,
  With ivy-leaves or roses;
A coat the very coarsest
  Since tailoring began, —
O that 's the gay apparel
  Of Robin Merryman!

III.

Within his cottage Robin
  With joyful eye regards
A table and a bedstead,
  A flute, a pack of cards,
A chest, with nothing in it,
  An earthen water-can, —
O these are all the riches
  Of Robin Merryman!

IV.

To teach the village children
  The funniest kind of plays;
To tell a clever story;
  To dance on holidays;

To puzzle through the almanac;
A merry song to scan, —
O that is all the learning
Of Robin Merryman!

V.

To drink his mug of cider,
And never sigh for wine;
To look at courtly ladies,
Yet think his *Mag* divine;
To take the good that 's going,
Content with Nature's plan, —
O that is the philosophy
Of Robin Merryman!

VI.

To say, "O Gracious Father!
Excuse my merry pranks;
For all thy loving-kindness
I give thee hearty thanks;
And may I still be jolly
Through life's remaining span," —
O that 's the style of praying
With Robin Merryman!

VII.

Now, all ye wretched mortals
Aspiring to be rich;
And ye whose gilded coaches
Have tumbled in the ditch;
Leave off your silly whining,
Adopt a wiser plan;
Go follow the example
Of Robin Merryman!

THE KING OF NORMANDY.

(From Béranger's "Le Roi d'Yvetot.")

I.

In Normandy there reigned a king
(I 've quite forgot his name)
Who led a jolly sort of life,
And did n't care for fame.
A nightcap was his crown of state,
Which Jenny placed upon his pate.
Ha! ha! laugh and sing:
O was n't he a funny king?

II.

He ate his meals, like other folk,
Slept soundly and secure,
And on a donkey every year
He made his royal tour;
A little dog — it was his whim —
Was body-guard enough for him.
Ha! ha! laugh and sing:
O was n't he a funny king?

III.

A single foible he confessed, —
A tendency to drink;
But kings who heed their subjects' need
Should mind their own, I think;
And thus it was his tax he got, —
For every cask an extra pot.
Ha! ha! laugh and sing:
O was n't he a funny king?

IV.

The lasses loved this worthy king;
And many a merry youth
Would hail his majesty as "Sire,"
And often spoke the truth.
He viewed his troops in goodly ranks,
But still their cartridges were blanks.
Ha! ha! laugh and sing:
O was n't he a funny king?

V.

He never stole his neighbors' land
To magnify his realm;
But steered his little ship of state
With honor at the helm;

And when at last the king was dead,
No wonder all the people said, —
"Ah! ah! weep and sing:
O was n't he a noble king?"

THE HUNTER AND THE MILKMAID.

(From Béranger's "Le Chasseur et la Laitière.")

I.

THE lark is singing her matin lay,
O come with me, fair maiden, I pray;
Sweet, O sweet is the morning hour,
And sweeter still is yon ivied bower;
Wreaths of roses I 'll twine for thee,
O come, fair maiden, along with me!
Ah! Sir Hunter, my mother is near;
I really must n't be loitering here.

II.

Thy mother, fair maiden, is far away,
And never will listen a word we say.
I 'll sing thee a song that ladies sing
In royal castles to please the king;
A wondrous song, whose magical charm
Will keep the singer from every harm.
Fie! Sir Hunter, a fig for your song.
Good by! for I must be going along.

III.

Ah! well, if singing will not prevail,
I 'll tell thee, then, a terrible tale;
'T is all about a Baron so bold,
Huge and swart, and ugly and old,
Who saw the ghost of his murdered wife, —
A pleasant story, upon my life!
Ah! Sir Hunter, the story is flat;
I know one worth a dozen of that.

IV.

I 'll teach thee, then, a curious prayer
Of wondrous power the wolf to scare,
And frighten the witch that hovers nigh
To blight the young with her evil eye.
O guard, fair maiden, thy beauty well,
A fearful thing is her wicked spell!
O, I can read my missal, you know.
Good by, Sir Hunter, for I must go.

V.

Nay, tarry a moment, my charming girl:
Here is a jewel of gold and pearl;
A beautiful cross it is, I ween,
As ever on beauty's breast was seen.
There 's nothing at all but love to pay;
Take it, and wear it, but only stay!
Ah! Sir Hunter, what excellent taste!
I 'm not — in such — particular — haste!

THE POET TO HIS GARRET.

(FROM BÉRANGER.)

THRICE welcome the place where at twenty I sought
A nest for myself and my darling grisette;
Where I learned the queer lessons that poverty taught,
And with friendship and love banished care and regret.
'T was here that we managed our social affairs,
Unheeding what dunces or sages might say;
How lightly I bounded up six pair o' stairs!
Ah! life in a garret at twenty is gay!

'T was only a garret! the table stood here;
And there a flock-bed, — 't was the best we could get;
And here on the plaster in charcoal appear
Three lines of a poem, unfinished as yet.
"Come back to me, Pleasures!" I eagerly shout;
"To keep you alive in my juvenile day
How oft my repeater was 'put up the spout!'"
Ah! life in a garret at twenty is gay!

My laughing Lisette! would she only come back.
In her jaunty straw bonnet how charming was she!
Full well I remember her dexterous knack
Of hanging her shawl where the curtain should be;
Love! kiss her silk gown with your fondest caress;
You know where she got it, I venture to say.
I never was certain who paid for the dress;
Ah! life in a garret at twenty is gay!

One notable day in those glorious years,
As we sat in the midst of our feasting and fun,
A shout from the people saluted our ears,
"Napoleon is victor! Marengo is won!"
A new song of triumph at once we essayed,
While cannon were blazing and booming away,
"The free soil of France kings shall never invade!"
Ah! life in a garret at twenty is gay!

Away! I must go lest my reason should reel;
For one of those days I would cheerfully give,
With the pulses of youth that no longer I feel,
All the lingering years I am destined to live;
The love, hope, and joy that at twenty I had,
To have them condensed in one glorious day,
Like those that I spent when a light-hearted lad!
Ah! life in a garret at twenty is gay!

THE DINNER.

FROM THE GERMAN OF GOETHE.

AH! many a guest is coming
Around my table to-day;
The fish, the flesh, and the poultry
Are smoking in goodly array;

The invitations were special,
They say they will surely appear.
Hans, go look at the window;
Time that the people were here!

Girls are coming by dozens,
Maidens whom even their foes
Never have once detected
Kissing beneath the rose;
Such are the damsels invited;
They said they would surely appear.
Hans, go look at the window;
Time that the maidens were here!

Plenty of fine young fellows
Are coming to drink my health;
Civil, and moral, and modest,
Spite of their titles and wealth.
The invitations were early;
They say they will surely appear.
Hans, go look at the window;
Time that the younkers were here!

Plenty of wives are coming,
Such as the ugliest spouse
Never has driven a moment
To think of breaking their vows.
How pleasant to see them together!
They said they would surely appear;
Hans, go look at the window;
Time that the women were here!

Husbands also are coming,
Models of temperate lives;
Men who are blind to beauty,
Save in their excellent wives.
All were politely invited,
And say they will surely appear;
Hans, go look at the window;
Time that the fellows were here!

Poets are also invited;
The pleasantest ever were known;
Who list to another's verses
Cheerfully as to their own;
What capital dining companions!
They said they would surely appear.
Hans, go look at the window;
Time that the poets were here!

Alas! with watching and waiting,
The dinner is certainly spoiled;
The viands are cold in the dishes,
The roast and the baked and the boiled.
Perhaps we were over-punctilious;
Our feast is a failure, I fear.
Hans, come away from the window;
Never a one will be here!

FOOLS INCORRIGIBLE.

FROM THE GERMAN OF GOETHE.

I.

All the old sages, however indeed
They wrangle and fight in the bitterest way,
In one thing, at least, are fully agreed:
They wink at each other and laughingly say,
For the mending of fools it is foolish to wait,
Fools will be fools as certain as fate.
Sons of Wisdom! make 'em your tools;
That, only that, is the use of fools!

II.

Merlin, the ancient, long in his shroud,
Where I accosted him once in my youth,

Unto my questioning answered aloud,
Solemnly speaking this notable truth:
For the mending of fools it is foolish to wait,
Fools will be fools as certain as fate.
Sons of Wisdom! make 'em your tools;
That, only that, is the use of fools!

III.

High on the top of an Indian mound
I heard it once in the passing air;
And Egypt's vaults, deep under the ground,
The same old tale were echoing there:
For the mending of fools it is foolish to wait,
Fools will be fools as certain as fate.
Sons of Wisdom! make 'em your tools,
That, only that, is the use of fools!

THE BEST OF HUSBANDS.

FROM THE GERMAN.

O I HAVE a man as good as can be,
No woman could wish for a better than he.
Sometimes, indeed, he may chance to be wrong,
But his love for me is uncommonly strong.

He has one little fault that makes me fret,
He has ever less money, by far, than debt;
Moreover, he thrashes me now and then;
But, excepting that, he 's the best of men!

I own he is dreadfully given to drink,
Besides, he is rather too fond, I think,
Of playing at cards and dice; but then,
Excepting that, he 's the best of men!

He loves to chat with the girls, I know
('T is the way with men, they are always so),
But what care I for his flirting, when,
Excepting that, he 's the best of men?

When soaked with rum, he is hardly polite,
But knocks the crockery left and right,
And pulls my hair, and growls again;
But, excepting that, he 's the best of men!

I can't but say I think he is rash
To pawn my pewter, and spend the cash,
But I have n't the heart to scold him, when,
Excepting that, he 's the best of men!

What joy to think he is all my own!
The best of husbands that ever was known;
As good, indeed, as a man can be;
And who could wish for a better than he?

LOVE POEMS.

LOVE POEMS.

WOULD N'T YOU LIKE TO KNOW?

A MADRIGAL.

I.

I KNOW a girl with teeth of pearl,
And shoulders white as snow;
She lives, — ah! well,
I must not tell, —
Would n't you like to know?

II.

Her sunny hair is wondrous fair,
And wavy in its flow;
Who made it less
One little tress, —
Would n't you like to know?

III.

Her eyes are blue (celestial hue!)
And dazzling in their glow;
On whom they beam
With melting gleam, —
Would n't you like to know?

IV.

Her lips are red and finely wed,
Like roses ere they blow;
What lover sips
Those dewy lips, —
Would n't you like to know?

V.

Her fingers are like lilies fair
When lilies fairest grow;
Whose hand they press
With fond caress, —
Would n't you like to know?

VI.

Her foot is small, and has a fall
Like snowflakes on the snow;
And where it goes
Beneath the rose, —
Would n't you like to know?

VII.

She has a name, the sweetest name
That language can bestow.
'T would break the spell
If I should tell, —
Would n't you like to know?

THE LOVER'S VISION.

I.

IN my watching or my dreaming,
Came to me a blessèd vision;
Whether real or but seeming,
Boots me not to make decision:
This I know — 't was all elysian.

II.

By me sat a maiden fairer
Than the Oda's king possesses;
But I wrong her to compare her.
Happy, happy whom she blesses
With her kisses and caresses!

III.

Golden hair, like sunlight streaming
On the marble of her shoulder,
That with soft and snowy gleaming
Witched the eye of the beholder,
Dazed me, crazed me to enfold her!

IV.

Heart to heart we sat together;
(Ah, to feel her bosom's beating!)
Hand in hand in loving tether,
Lip with lip in rapture meeting,
Parting but for closer greeting.

V.

Oft and oft I would be dreaming,
Could I bring that happy vision!
Was it real, or but seeming?
Boots me not to make decision:
This I know — 't was all elysian.

THE OATH.

"Don't forget me!" sighing sadly,
So my darling bade farewell,
Haply deeming I would gladly
Disenchant me of her spell.

Ah, the siren! when did Beauty
Ask in vain Love's simple debt?
Or whene'er did languid Duty
Heed the warning, "Don't forget"?

By her eyes where love reposes,
By her wealth of golden hair,
By her cheek's ungathered roses,
By her neck divinely fair,

By her bosom, throne of blisses,
Hiding from the wanton light,
Pale with envy at the kisses
That her bolder lips invite;

By the hours so sweetly squandered
In the summer afternoons;
By the orchard where we wandered
In the sheen of harvest moons;

By the poets, new and olden,
Who in pity lent us speech
For the fancies, rare and golden,
That our words could never reach, —

By all these my oath is given:
Though my soul remember not
Earthly fame or hope of heaven,
She shall never be forgot!

UNREST.

One o'clock! and still I ponder
On the joys of yesterday;
Never lover weaker, fonder,
Sighed the weary hours away.

Ill-content with saying, singing,
All its worship o'er and o'er;
Still the heart would fain be clinging
Round its idol, evermore!

Half in pleasure, half in sorrow,
Thinking o'er each fervent kiss,
Still I vainly strive to borrow
From the Past its buried bliss.

Now I hear her fondly sighing,
As when late we sat alone,
While the dancer's feet were flying, —
Ah! the sigh is but my own!

"Thus my darling I would smother!"
In my dreaming oft I say.
Foolish lips, that kiss each other!
Hers, alas! are far away.

On my cheek I feel the billow
Of her glowing bosom beat, —
Ah! 't is but the pulseless pillow!
Shall I curse or bless the cheat?

Dreaming, waking, I am weary.
Would that morning might appear!
O, 't is dreary, very dreary,
Thus to love, and not be near!

TO MY LOVE.

"Da mi basia." — CATULLUS.

I.

KISS me softly and speak to me low;
Malice has ever a vigilant ear;
What if Malice were lurking near?
Kiss me, dear!
Kiss me softly and speak to me low.

II.

Kiss me softly and speak to me low;
Envy too has a watchful ear;
What if Envy should chance to hear?
Kiss me, dear!
Kiss me softly and speak to me low.

III.

Kiss me softly and speak to me low;
Trust me, darling, the time is near
When we may love with never a fear;
Kiss me, dear!
Kiss me softly and speak to me low.

TO LESBIA.

"On s'embrasse à chaque instant,
Puis encore!"
VICTOR HUGO.

I.

GIVE me kisses! Do not stay,
Counting in that careful way.
All the coins your lips can print
Never will exhaust the mint.
Kiss me, then,
Every moment — and again!

II.

Give me kisses! Do not stop,
Measuring nectar by the drop.
Though to millions they amount,
They will never drain the fount.
Kiss me, then,
Every moment — and again!

III.

Give me kisses! All is waste
Save the luxury we taste;
And for kissing, — kisses live
Only when we take or give.
Kiss me, then,
Every moment — and again!

IV.

Give me kisses! Though their worth
Far exceeds the gems of earth,
Never pearls so rich and pure
Cost so little, I am sure.
Kiss me, then,
Every moment — and again!

V

Give me kisses! Nay, 't is true
I am just as rich as you;
And for every kiss I owe,
I can pay you back, you know.
Kiss me, then,
Every moment — and again!

MY SAXON BLONDE.

THEY say the dark-eyed maids of Spain
Are passionate and fond;
But eyes of blue are tender and true, —
Give me my Saxon blonde!

An arch coquette is the bright brunette,
Blithe and merry and gay;
Her love may last till the Summer is past,
But my blonde's forever and aye!

If bards of old the truth have told,
The Sirens have raven hair;
But o'er the earth, since art had birth,
They paint the Angels fair.

Ah! well, maybe, the truth to see,
A lover is over fond;
And I can't deny — nor will I try —
My love is a golden blonde!

DARLING, TELL ME YES.

A SONG.

I.

ONE little moment more, Maud;
One little whisper more;
I have a word to speak, Maud,
I never breathed before.
What can it be but *love*, Maud?
And do I rightly guess
'T is pleasant to your ear, Maud?
O darling! tell me *yes!*

II.

The burden of my heart, Maud,
There 's little need to tell;
There 's little need to say, Maud,
I 've loved you long and well.
There 's language in a sigh, Maud,
One's meaning to express;
And yours — was it for *me*, Maud?
O darling! tell me *yes!*

III.

My eyes have told my love, Maud;
And on my burning cheek
You 've read the tender thought, Maud,
My lips refused to speak.
I gave you all my heart, Maud,
'T is needless to confess;

And did you give me yours, Maud?
O darling! tell me *yes!*

IV.

'T is sad to starve a love, Maud,
So worshipful and true;
I know a little cot, Maud,
Quite large enough for two;
And you will be my wife, Maud?
So may you ever bless,
Through all your sunny life, Maud,
The day you answered *yes!*

TIME AND LOVE.

AN ALLEGORY.

Old Time and young Love, on a morning in May,
Chanced to meet by a river in halcyon weather,
And, agreeing for once, ('t is a fable, you 'll say,)
In the same little boat made a voyage together.

Strong, steady, and patient, Time pulled at his oar,
And swift o'er the water the voyagers go;
But Love, who was thinking of Pleasure on shore,
Complained that his boatman was wretchedly slow.

But Time, the old sailor, expert at his trade,
And knowing the leagues that remained to be done,
Content with the regular speed that he made,
Tugged away at his oar and kept steadily on.

Love, always impatient of doubt or delay,
Now sighed for the aid of the favoring gales,
And scolded at Time, in the sauciest way,
For not having furnished the shallop with sails.

But Time, as serene as a calendar saint,
(Whatever the graybeard was thinking upon,)
All deaf to the voice of the younker's complaint,
Tugged away at his oar and kept steadily on.

Love, vexed at the heart, only clamored the more,
And cried, "By the gods! in what country or clime
Was ever a lubber who handled an oar
In so lazy a fashion as old Father Time?"

But Time only smiled in a cynical way,
('T is often the mode with your elderly Don,)
As one who knows more than he cares to display,
And still at his oar pulled steadily on.

Grown calmer at last, the exuberant boy
Enlivens the minutes with snatches of rhyme;
The voyage, at length, he begins to enjoy,
And soon has forgotten the presence of Time!

But Time, the severe, egotistical elf,
Since the day that his travels he entered upon,

Has ne'er for a moment forgotten himself,
But tugs at his oar and keeps steadily on.

Awaking once more, Love sees with a sigh
That the River of Life will be presently passed,
And now he breaks forth with a piteous cry,
"O Time, gentle Time! you are rowing too fast!"

But Time, well knowing that Love will be dead,
Dead, — dead! in the boat! — ere the voyage is done,
Only gives him an ominous shake of the head,
While he tugs at his oar and keeps steadily on!

LOVE'S CALENDAR.

TO AN ABSENT WIFE.

O SINCE 't is decreed by the envious Fates,
All deaf to the clamoring heart,
That the truest and fondest of conjugal mates
Shall often be sighing apart;

Since the Days of our absence are many and sad,
And the Hours of our meeting are few,
Ah! what in a case so exceedingly bad,
Can the deepest philosophy do?

Pray what can we do, — unfortunate elves,
Unconscious of folly or crime, —
But make a new Calendar up for ourselves,
For the better appraisal of time?

And the *Hours* alone shall the Calendar fill,
(While *Blanks* show their distance apart,)
Just sufficiently near to keep off the chill
That else might be freezing the heart;

And each Hour shall be such a glorious hour,
Its moments so precious and dear,
That in breadth, and in depth, and in bliss-giving power,
It may fairly be reckoned a year!

THE LAWYER'S VALENTINE.

I 'M notified, fair neighbor mine,
By one of our profession,
That this — the Term of Valentine —
Is Cupid's Special Session.

Permit me, therefore, to report
Myself, on this occasion,
Quite ready to proceed to Court,
And File my Declaration.

I 've an Attachment for you, too;
A legal and a strong one;
O, yield unto the Process, do;
Nor let it be a long one!

No scowling bailiff lurks behind;
He 'd be a precious noddy,
Who, failing to Arrest the mind,
Should go and Take the Body!

For though a form like yours might throw
A sculptor in distraction;
I could n't serve a Capias, — no,
I 'd scorn so base an Action!

O, do not tell me of your youth,
And turn away demurely;
For though you 're very young, in truth,
You 're not an Infant surely!

The Case is everything to me;
My heart is love's own tissue;
Don't plead a Dilatory Plea;
Let 's have the General Issue!

Or, since you 've really no Defence,
Why not, this present Session,
Omitting all absurd pretence,
Give judgment by Confession?

So shall you be my lawful wife;
And I — your faithful lover —
Be Tenant of your heart for Life,
With no Remainder over!

A REASONABLE PETITION.

You say, dearest girl, you esteem me,
And hint of respectful regard,
And I 'm certain it would n't beseem me
Such an excellent gift to discard.
But even the Graces, you 'll own,
Would lose half their beauty apart;
And Esteem, when she stands all alone,
Looks most unbecomingly tart.
So grant me, dear girl, this petition: —
If Esteem e'er again should come hither,
Just to keep her in cheerful condition,
Let Love come in company with her!

THE CHAPEL OF TWO SAINTS.

In a famous Tuscan city
Stands a chapel snug and small;
Some old penitent's oblation,
With a double dedication,
To St. Peter and St. Paul.

To a soul so stoutly guarded
What of evil could befall?
When was ever plan completer
Without robbery of Peter,
Paying thus his due to Paul?

There it was I saw a lady,
Very round and ripe and tall;
Surely never face was sweeter
Than she turned upon St. Peter,
After bowing to St. Paul.

Long and ardently I worshipped, —
Not the Saints, nor yet their Master,
But my feminine ideal;
Mea culpa! she was real
Flesh and blood, and they were plaster!

Good St. Anthony was tempted,
Though a frigid old divine
(Showing saints are only human),
But he never saw a woman
Half so beautiful as mine!

Pardon then my bad behavior,
(Thus upon the twain I call,)
As if you were in my case,
And were asking special grace
Of St. Peter and St. Paul!

THE LITTLE MAID AND THE LAWYER.

A SONG.

I.

THEY say, little maid, quoth Lawyer Brown,
I 'm the cleverest man in all the town.
Heigh-ho! says she,
What 's that to me?
But they say, little maid, quoth Lawyer Brown,
You 're the prettiest girl in all the town.
Says she, If they do,
What 's that to you?

II.

They say, little maid, quoth Lawyer Brown,
I 'm the richest man in all the town.
Heigh-ho! says she,
What 's that to me?
But they say, little maid, quoth Lawyer Brown,
You ought to be dressed in a finer gown.
Says she, If they do,
What 's that to you?

III.

They say, little maid, quoth Lawyer Brown,
That Johnny Hodge is an awkward clown.
Heigh-ho! says she,
What 's that to me?
But they say, little maid, the lawyer said,
That you and Johnny are going to wed.
Says she, If we do,
What 's that to you?

DRINKING SONG.

BY A TEETOTALER.

"Ex ipso fonte bibi." — OVID.

I 'VE been drinking, I 've been drinking,
To intoxication's edge;
Do not chide me; for the tipple
Was n't mentioned in the pledge.

Nay, believe me, — 't was not Brandy
Wrought the roses that you see;
One may get a finer crimson
From a purer *eau-de-vie.*

No, indeed; it was not Claret
(That were something overweak);
There 's a vastly better vintage
For the painting of a cheek.

Not Angelica, — the honey
By Loyola's children pressed
From the Andalusian clusters
Ripened in the Golden West;

Not Madeira, Hock, nor Sherry;
No, indeed, 't is none of these
Makes me giddy in the forehead,
Makes me tremble in the knees.

No; 't is not the Gallic "Widow"
That has turned my foolish brain,
Nor the wine of any vineyard
Found in Germany or Spain.

Nay — I own it! — 't is the nectar
That a favored lover sips
(All unheeding of the danger!)
From a maiden's pulpy lips!

This it is that I 've been drinking
To intoxication's edge;

Till I marvel that the tipple
  Is n't mentioned in the pledge!

For the taste is so enchanting
  'T is impossible to see,
Should it grow into a habit,
  What the consequence may be.

Well, I 'll heed the sage's lesson,
  Pleasant, though it prove in vain,
And by drinking very largely
  Try to sober me again!

EGO ET ECHO.

A FANTASY.

I.

I ASKED of Echo, 't other day,
  (Whose words are few and often funny,)
What to a novice she could say
  Of courtship, love, and matrimony?
  Quoth Echo, plainly: "*Matter-o'-money!*

II.

Whom should I marry? should it be
  A dashing damsel, gay and pert, —
A pattern of inconstancy;
  Or selfish, mercenary flirt?
  Quoth Echo, sharply: "*Nary flirt!*"

III.

What if, aweary of the strife
  That long has lured the dear deceiver,
She promised to amend her life,
  And sin no more, can I believe her?
  Quoth Echo, very promptly: "*Leave her!*"

IV.

But if some maiden with a heart,
  On me should venture to bestow it:
Pray, should I act the wiser part
  To take the treasure, or forego it?
  Quoth Echo, with decision: "*Go it!*"

V.

Suppose a billet-doux (in rhyme),
  As warm as if Catullus penned it,
Declare her beauty so sublime
  That Cytherea's can't transcend it, —
  Quoth Echo, very clearly: "*Send it!*"

VI.

But what if, seemingly afraid
  To bind her fate in Hymen's fetter,
She vow she means to die a maid, —
  In answer to my loving letter?
  Quoth Echo, rather coolly: "*Let her!*"

VII.

What if, in spite of her disdain,
  I find my heart entwined about
With Cupid's dear delicious chain,
  So closely that I can't get out?
  Quoth Echo, laughingly: "*Get out!*"

VIII.

But if some maid with beauty blest,
  As pure and fair as Heaven can make her,

Will share my labor and my rest,
Till envious Death shall overtake her?
Quoth Echo (*sotto voce*): "*Take her!*"

THE MAIDEN TO THE MOON.[4]

O MOON! did you see
My lover and me
In the valley beneath the sycamore-tree?
Whatever befell,
O Moon! don't tell;
'T was nothing amiss, you know very well.

O Moon! you know,
A long time ago
You left the sky and descended below,
Of a Summer's night,
By your own sweet light,
To meet your Endymion on Latmos height.

And there, O Moon!
You gave him a boon,
You would n't, I 'm sure, have granted at noon;
'T was nothing amiss,
Being only the bliss
Of giving — and taking — an innocent kiss!

Some churlish lout,
Who was spying about,
Went off and blabbed, and so it got out;
But for all the gold
The sea could hold,
O Moon! *I* would n't have gone and told!

So, Moon! don't tell,
Whatever befell
My lover and me in the leafy dell;
He is honest and true,
And, remember, too,
We only behaved like your lover and you!

DAISY DAY.

A REMINISCENCE OF TRAVEL.

IT was in an Irish city,
In the pleasant month of May,
That I met the clever, pretty,
Lively, lovely Daisy Day.
Like myself, a transient ranger
From Columbia's troubled shore,
Could I deem her quite a stranger,
Though we never met before?

Love of country — so despotic
In our precious native land —
Finds us doubly patriotic,
Straying on a foreign strand;
Hence, perhaps, her friendly manner,
And my pulse's quicker play,
When, beneath St. Patrick's banner,
I accosted Daisy Day.

Bless me! how all eyes were centred
On her, when the parlor door
Opened, and the lady entered
Like a queen upon the floor!
'T was as if, that summer even,
Some superlative perfume,
Wafted by the breath of Heaven,
Suddenly had filled the room!

Happy favorite of Nature,
Hebe in her sunny face,

Juno in her queenly stature,
More than Juno in her grace,
Eyes befitting Beauty's goddess,
Mouth to steal your heart away,
Bust that strained her ample bodice, —
Such was charming Daisy Day.

Well, what then? Ah! Holy Mother!
Pardon one pathetic sigh;
She 's the "partner" of another,
And — I own it — so am I!
But a poet owes to Beauty
More than common men can pay,
And I 've done my simple duty,
Singing thus of Daisy Day.

A SUMMER SCENE.

I SAW you, lately, at an hour
To lovers reckoned dear
For tender trysts; and this is what
I chanced to see and hear:

You sat beneath the Summer moon,
A friend on either hand,
And one applauded your discourse,
And one — could understand.

You quoted gems of poesy
By mighty masters wrought;
And one remarked the pleasant rhyme,
And one, the golden thought.

Your smiles (how equally bestowed!)
Upon the list'ners fell;
And one was fain to praise your eyes,
And one, to read them well.

You jested in a merry vein,
And, conscious, played the child;
And one was moved to brave retort,
And one, in silence, smiled.

You spoke of angel-life above
That evermore endures;
And one looked up, with lifted hands,
And one — was kissing yours!

And then you laughed the ringing laugh
That shows a spirit glad;
And one, thereat, was very gay,
And one was something sad.

And did you guess (ah! need I ask?)
While thus they sat with you,
That one was but a light gallant,
And one a lover true?

TO A BEAUTIFUL STRANGER.

A GLANCE, a smile, — I see it yet!
A moment ere the train was starting;
How strange to tell! we scarcely met,
And yet I felt a pang at parting.

And you, (alas! that all the while
'T is *I* alone who am confessing!)
What thought was lurking in your smile
Is quite beyond my simple guessing.

I only know those beaming rays
  Awoke in me a strange emotion,
Which, basking in their warmer blaze,
  Perhaps might kindle to devotion.

Ah! many a heart as stanch as this,
  By smiling lips allured from Duty,
Has sunk in Passion's dark abyss, —
  "Wrecked on the coral reefs of Beauty!"

And so, 't is well the train's swift flight
  That bore away my charming stranger
Took her — God bless her! — out of sight,
  And me, as quickly, out of danger!

HERCULES SPINNING.

I.

Bond slave to Omphalè,
  The haughty Lydian queen,
Fond slave to Omphalè,
  The beauteous Lydian queen,
  Lo! Hercules is seen
Spinning, spinning like a maid,
While aside his club is laid,
And the hero boasts no more
All his doughty deeds of yore,
But with sad, submissive mien
Spinning, spinning still is seen,
  Bond slave to Omphalè,
  Fond slave to Omphalè,
The haughty Lydian queen.

II.

Shame! that for a woman's whim,
He, so stout of heart and limb,
Must his nature so abuse
Thus his mighty arm to use, —
Not the manly mace to whirl,
But a tiny spindle twirl,
Spinning, spinning like a girl,
With a soft, submissive mien,
  Bond slave to Omphalè,
  Fond slave to Omphalè,
The haughty Lydian queen.

III.

Fond slave to Omphalè, —
  Bond slave no more;
Love has loosed whom Tyranny
  Basely bound before!
The distaff now is cast aside,
And, leaning on his club in pride,
  Lo! Hercules is seen
  In majesty serene, —
A hero sitting by his bride,
  Fair Omphalè, his queen!

IV.

Whatever mortals crave,
  So rule the gods above
That manly Strength is Beauty's slave,
  And Beauty yields to Love.

HOW IT HAPPENED.

"Ah! we love each other well,
Better far than words can tell,"
Said my charmer; "but in vain
Are my efforts to explain
How it happened. Tell me now,
Dearest, of the *why* and *how!*
Since the fact we cannot doubt,
Tell me how it came about."

Well, my darling, I will try
To explain the *how* and *why*,
(Speaking for myself, not *you*;
That, of course, I cannot do.)
Not your brilliant mind alone
Could have thus enthralled my own;
Not the charm of every grace
Beaming from your sunny face;
Not your voice, though music be
Less melodious to me;
Not your kisses, sweeter far
Than the drops of Hybla are;
None of these, from each apart,
Could have so enchained my heart;
Nay, not e'en the wondrous whole
Could have fixed my wayward soul;
Had not love *your* love prevailed,
All the rest had surely failed.
There! you have the reason, dear;
Is the explanation clear?
Ah! I own it seems but weak;
Half the *why* is yet to seek;
Only this I surely know,
Never woman witched me so!
Happy let my charmer be,
Since her eyes in mine may see
Flashes of the hidden fire
(Half devotion, half desire),
And her ears may hear the sighs
That from yearning love arise,
Whispering, in the fondest tone,
"Take me! I am all your own!"

EXAUDI ANGELUS.

Hear thou my prayer, O angel kind!
Who brought my gladdened eyes to see
Him whom so long I yearned to find,
And gave his dear heart all to me;
O, guard him well, that I may prove
Blest in my lover and my love.

And keep thou her whose fearful breast
Still trembles for its new-found joy,
(Knowing, ah me! but little rest)
Lest envious maids or gods destroy
This wondrous happiness that seems
Too bright for aught save angel dreams.

O, bless us twain! and kindly teach;
And safely guard each hallowed name
From blighting hint or blasting speech
To make our cheeks all red for shame,
That blush not for the love they bear
In thy pure presence, angel fair.

And while, with lips that closer cling
In dread to part, we say "Farewell!"
Keep thou this love a holy thing
That in us evermore may dwell,
By circling hearth or sundering sea,
Where'er our thankful hearts may be!

CARL AND I.

He calls me beautiful; and I
Ask of my glass the reason why;
Alack for me!

And yet though little there I see,
I must be beautiful, I trow,
When such as he can deem me so.

He calls me brilliant; all in vain
I strive the wonder to explain;
Alack for me!
And yet, whate'er my fancy be,
Some spark of wit therein must glow
When such as he can think it so.

He calls me noble; and I turn
My soul within my soul to learn;
Alack for me!
I am not proud of what I see;
And yet some goodness there must grow,
When such as he can find it so.

He calls me lovely; and I try
To seek the specious reason why;
Alack for me!
And yet though vain my question be,
I must be lovely — well I know —
When such as he can love me so!

DO I LOVE THEE?

A SONG.

Do I love thee? Ask the bee
If she loves the flowery lea
Where the honeysuckle blows
And the fragrant clover grows.
As she answers, Yes or No,
Darling! take my answer so.

Do I love thee? Ask the bird
When her matin song is heard,
If she loves the sky so fair,
Fleecy cloud and liquid air.
As she answers, Yes or No,
Darling! take my answer so.

Do I love thee? Ask the flower
If she loves the vernal shower,
Or the kisses of the sun,
Or the dew, when day is done.
As she answers, Yes or No,
Darling! take my answer so.

THE LOVER'S CONFESSION.

"Come, name my fault!" I said, "that I
May mend it." So I made reply
To Laura, darling of my heart,
Whom long, in vain, by every art
I tried to force to franker speech.
"Do tell me plainly, I beseech,
For my soul's sake, that while I live
I may repent and Heaven forgive!"
"'T is *worldliness!*" at last she said,
And, blushing, drooped her lovely head,
As if she feared I might infer
She meant forgetfulness of *her*.
"And is that *all?*" I answered. "Well,
I own the world's enchanting spell;
The fault is one I cannot hide;
But ah! 't is not for you to chide;
Still, dearest, let me worldly be,
Since *you* are 'all the world' to me!"

A PHILOSOPHICAL QUERY.

TO ——.

If Virtue be measured by what we resist,
When against Inclination we strive,

You and I have been proved, we may fairly insist,
The most virtuous mortals alive!
Now Virtue, we know, is the brightest of pearls,
But as Pleasure is hard of evasion,
Should we envy, or pity, the stoical churls
Who never have known a temptation?

LIP-SERVICE.

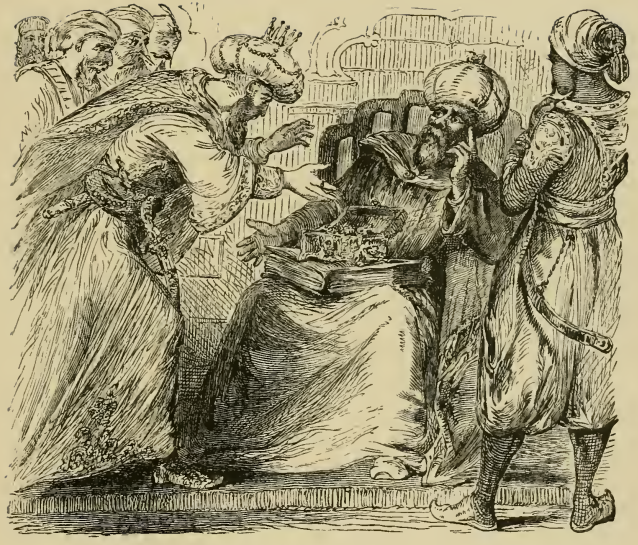
I.

JULIA once and once again,
In coquettish fashion
Heedless of her lover's pain,
Mocked his burning passion:
"Words of worship lightly fall
From a courtier, surely;
Mere lip-service, — that is all!"
Said the maid, demurely.

II.

Then his kisses fell like dew
(Just where Love would choose 'em)
On her mouth; and through and through
Thrilled her glowing bosom;
Till she felt — nor uttered she
Whisper of negation —
"Mere lip-service" still may be
Perfect adoration!

FAIRY TALES LEGENDS, AND APOLOGUES.



FAIRY TALES, LEGENDS, AND APOLOGUES.

FATHER PUMPKIN; OR, ALWAYS IN LUCK.

AN ARABIAN TALE.

I.

In Cairo once there dwelt a worthy man,
Toilsome and frugal, but extremely poor;
"Howe'er," he grumbled, "I may toil and plan,
The wolf is ever howling at my door,
While arrant rascals thrive and prosper; hence
I much misdoubt the ways of Providence.

II.

"Allah is Allah; and, we all agree,
Mohammed is his Prophet. Be it so;
But what 's Mohammed ever done for me,
To boil my kettle, I should like to know?
The thieves fare better; and I much incline
From this day forth to make their calling mine."

III.

"Dog of an Arab!" cried his pious spouse,
"So you would steal to better your estate,
And hasten Allah's vengeance! Shame! arouse!
Why sit you there repining at your fate?
Pray to the Prophet, — sinner that you are, —
Then wash your face and go to the Bazaar.

IV.

"Take with you pen and paper and a book,
And, sitting in a corner, gravely make
Some mystic scrawls; put on a solemn look,
As if you were a wise and learned sheik;
And, mark my word, the people in a trice
Will come in throngs to purchase your advice."

V.

"'T is worth a trial, woman, I confess;
Things can't be worse," the moody Arab said;
"But then, alas! I have no proper dress,
Not e'en a turban to adorn my head."
"Allah be praised!" Just here the woman spied
A hollow pumpkin lying at her side.

VI.

"See! this will do!" and, cutting it in twain,
She placed the half upon her husband's pate;
"'T is quaint and grave, and well befits thy brain,
Most reverend master," cried the dame, elate.
"Now to thy labor hasten thee away,
And thou shalt prosper from this very day!"

VII.

And so, obedient to his wife's command,
The anxious sheik procured a little nook
In the Bazaar, where, sitting by a stand,
With much grimace he pored upon his book,
Peering around, at intervals, to spy
A customer, if such a thing were nigh.

VIII.

And soon, indeed, a customer appeared,
A peasant pale and sweating with distress.
"Good Father Pumpkin! may your mighty beard"
(Bowing in reverence) "be never less!
I come to crave your counsel; for, alas!
Most learned Father, I have lost my ass."

IX.

"Now, curse the donkey!" cried the puzzled man,
Unto himself, "and curse Fatima too,
Who sent me here! for, do the best I can,
And that 's the best that any one can do,
I 'm sure to blunder." So, in sheer despair,
He named the graveyard; "Seek your donkey there!"

X.

It chanced the ass that very moment grazed
Within the graveyard, as the sheik had told;
And so the peasant, joyful and amazed,
Gave thanks and money; nor could he withhold
His pious prayers, but, bowing to the ground,
Cried, "Great is Allah! — for my ass is found!"

XI.

"Allah *is* Allah!" said the grateful sheik,
Returning homeward with his precious fee;
"I much rejoice for dear Fatima's sake;
Few men, in sooth, have such a mate as she;
Most wives are bosh, or worse than bosh, but mine
In wit and beauty is almost divine!"

XII.

Next day he hastened early to his post,
But found some clients had arrived before;
One eager dame a skein of silk had lost;
Another money; and a dozen more,

Of either sex, were waiting to recover
A fickle mistress or a truant lover.

XIII.

With solemn face the sheik replied to each
Whate'er his whim might move his tongue to say;
And all turned out according to his speech;
And so it chanced for many a lucky day,
Till "Father Pumpkin" grew a famous seer,
Whose praise had even reached the Sultan's ear.

XIV.

"Allah is Allah!" cried the happy sheik;
"And nevermore, Fatima, will I doubt
Mohammed is his prophet; let us take
Our ease henceforward—" Here a sudden shout
Announced the Sultan's janizaries, sent,
They said, to seize him,—but with kind intent.

XV.

"The Grand Seraglio has been robbed by knaves
Of all the royal jewels; and the Porte,
To get them back again, your presence craves
In Stamboul; he will pay you richly for 't,
If you succeed; if not,—why then, instead
Of getting money, you will lose your head."

XVI.

"My curse upon thee!" cried the angry man
Unto Fatima; "see what thou hast done!
O woman, woman! since the world began
All direst mischiefs underneath the sun
Are woman's doing—" Here the Sultan's throng
Of janizaries bade him, "Come along!"

XVII.

The seer's arrival being now proclaimed,
Throughout the capital, the robbers quake
With very fear; while, trembling and ashamed,
In deeper terror sits the wretched sheik,
Cursing Fatima for a wicked wife
Whose rash ambition has betrayed his life.

XVIII.

"But seven short days my sands have yet to run,
And then, alas! I lose my foolish head;
These seven white beans I 'll swallow, one by one,
To mark each passing day ere I am dead.
Alas! alas! the Sultan's hard decree!
The sun is setting: *there goes one!*" said he.

XIX.

Just then a thief (the leader of the band
That stole the Sultan's jewels) passing by,

Heard the remark, and saw the lifted hand,
And ran away as fast as he could fly,
To tell his comrades that, beyond a doubt,
The cunning seer had fairly found him out.

XX.

Next day another, ere the hour was dark,
Passed by the casement where the sheik was seen;
His hand was lifted warningly, and hark!
"*There goes a second!*" (swallowing the bean.)
The robber fled, amazed, and told the crew
'T was time to counsel what were best to do.

XXI.

But still,—as if the faintest doubt to cure,—
The following eve the robbers sent a third;
And so till six had made the matter sure,
(For unto each the same event occurred),
When, taking counsel, they at once agreed
To seek the wizard and confess the deed.

XXII.

"Most reverend Father," thus the chief began,
"Thy thoughts are just; thy spoken words are true;
To hide from thee surpasses mortal man;
Our evil works henceforward we eschew,
For now we know that sinning never thrives;
Here, take the jewels, but O, spare our lives!"

XXIII.

"The law enjoins," the joyful sheik replied,
"That bloody Death shall end the robber's days;
But, that your sudden virtue may be tried,
Swear on the Koran you will mend your ways,
And then depart." The robbers roundly swore,
In Allah's name, that they would rob no more.

XXIV.

"Allah *is* Allah!" cried the grateful sheik,
Holding the jewels in the vizier's face.
The vizier answered, "Sir, be pleased to take
The casket to the Sultan. "No, your Grace,"
The sheik replied, "the gems are *here*, you see;
Pray tell the Sultan he may come to me!"

XXV.

The Sultan came, and, ravished to behold
The precious jewels to his hand restored,
He made the finder rich in thanks and gold,
And on the instant pledged his royal word,
And straight confirmed it in the Prophet's name,
To grant whatever he might choose to claim.

XXVI.

"Sire of the Faithful! publish a decree"
(The sheik made answer) "and proclaim to all
That none henceforth shall ever question me
Of any matter either great or small;
I ask no more. So shall my labors cease;
My waning life I fain would spend in peace."

XXVII.

The Sultan answered: "Be it even so;
And may your beard increase a thousand-fold;
And may your house with children overflow!"
And so the sheik, o'erwhelmed with praise and gold,
Returned unto the city whence he came,
Blessing Mohammed's and Fatima's name!

THE KING AND THE COTTAGER.

A PERSIAN LEGEND.

I.

PRAY list unto a legend
The ancient poets tell;
'T is of a mighty monarch
In Persia once did dwell;
A mighty queer old monarch
Who ruled his kingdom well.

II.

"I must build another palace,"
Observed this mighty King;
"For this is getting shabby
Along the southern wing;
And, really, for a monarch,
It is n't quite the thing.

III.

"So I will have a new one,
Although I greatly fear,
To build it just to suit me,
Will cost me rather dear;
And I 'll choose, God wot, another spot,
Much finer than this here."

IV.

So he travelled o'er his kingdom
A proper site to find,
Where he might build a palace
Exactly to his mind,
All with a pleasant prospect
Before it, and behind.

V.

Not long with this endeavor
The King had travelled round,
Ere, to his royal pleasure,
A charming spot he found;
But an ancient widow's cabin
Was standing on the ground.

VI.

"Ah! here," exclaimed the monarch,
"Is just the proper spot,
If this woman would allow me
To remove her little cot."
But the beldam answered plainly,
She had rather he would not!

VII.

"Within this lonely cottage,
Great Monarch, I was born;
And only from this cottage
By Death will I be torn:
So spare it in your ustice,
Or spoil it in your scorn!"

VIII.

Then all the courtiers mocked her,
With cruel words and jeers: —
"'T is plain her royal master
She neither loves nor fears;
We would knock her ugly hovel
About her ugly ears!

IX.

"When ever was a subject
Who might the King withstand?
Or deem his spoken pleasure
As less than his command?
Of course he 'll rout the beldam,
And confiscate her land!"

X.

But, to their deep amazement,
His Majesty replied:
"Good woman, never heed them,
The *King* is on your side;
Your cottage is your castle,
And here you shall abide.

XI.

"To raze it in a moment,
The power is mine, I grant;
My absolute dominion
A hundred poets chant;
For being *Khan* of Persia,
There 's nothing that I *can't!*"

XII.

('T was in this pleasant fashion
The mighty monarch spoke;
For kings have merry fancies
Like other mortal folk:
And none so high and mighty
But loves his little joke.)

XIII.

"But power is scarcely worthy
Of honor or applause,
That in its domination
Contemns the widow's cause,
Or perpetrates injustice
By trampling on the laws.

XIV.

"That I have wronged the meanest
No honest tongue may say:
So bide you in your cottage,
Good woman, while you may;
What 's yours by deed and purchase
No man may take away.

XV.

"And I will build beside it,
For though your cot may be
In such a lordly presence
No fitting thing to see,
If it honor not my castle,
It will surely honor me!

XVI.

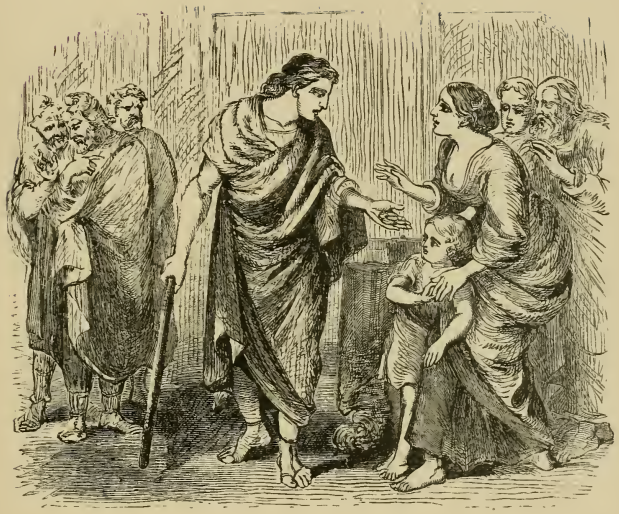
"For so my loyal people,
Who gaze upon the sight,
Shall know that in oppression
I do not take delight;
Nor hold a king's convenience
Before a subject's right."

XVII.

Now from his spoken purpose
The King departed not;
He built the royal dwelling
Upon the chosen spot,
And there they stood together,
The palace and the cot.

XVIII.

Sure such unseemly neighbors
Were never seen before;
"His Majesty is doting,"
His silly courtiers swore;
But all true loyal subjects,
They loved the King the more.



XIX.

Long, long he ruled his kingdom
In honor and renown;
But danger ever threatens
The head that wears a crown,
And Fortune, tired of smiling,
For once put on a frown.

XX.

For ever secret Envy
Attends a high estate;
And ever lurking Malice
Pursues the good and great;
And ever base Ambition
Will end in deadly Hate.

XXI.

And so two wicked courtiers,
Who long had strove in vain,
By craft and evil counsels,
To mar the monarch's reign,
Contrived a scheme infernal
Whereby he should be slain.

XXII.

But as all deeds of darkness
Are wont to leave a clew
Before the glaring sunlight
To bring the knaves to view,
That sin may be rewarded,
And Satan get his due, —

XXIII.

To plan their wicked treason,
They sought a lonely spot
Behind the royal palace,
Hard by the widow's cot,
Who heard their machinations,
And straight revealed the plot!

XXIV.

"I see," exclaimed the Persian,
"The just are wise alone;
Who spares the rights of others
May chance to guard his own;
The widow's humble cottage
Has propped a monarch's throne!"

THE YOUTH AND THE NORTHWIND.

A TALE OF NORWAY.

ONCE on a time -- 't was long ago —
There lived a worthy dame
Who sent her son to fetch some flour,
For she was old and lame.

But while he loitered on the road,
The Northwind chanced to stray
Across the careless younker's path,
And stole the flour away.

"Alas! what shall we do for bread?"
Exclaimed the weeping lad;
"The flour is gone, — the flour is gone, —
And it was all we had!"

And so he sought the Northwind's cave,
Beside the distant main;
"Good Mister Boreas," said the lad,
"I want my flour again."

"'T was all we had to live upon, —
My mother old and I;
O give us back the flour again,
Or we shall surely die!"

"I have it not," the Northwind growled;
"But, for your lack of bread,
I give to you this table-cloth;
'T will serve you well instead;

"For you have but to spread it out,
And every costly dish
Will straight appear at your command,
Whatever you may wish."

The lad received the magic cloth
With wonder and delight,
And thanked the donor heartily,
As well, indeed, he might.

Returning homeward, at an inn
Just half his journey through,
He fain must show his table-cloth,
And what the cloth could do.

So while he slept the knavish host
Went slyly to his bed,
And stole the cloth, — but shrewdly placed
Another in its stead.

Unknowing what the rogue had done,
The lad went on his way,
And came unto his journey's end
Just at the close of day.

He showed the dame his table-cloth,
And told her of its power;
"Good sooth!" he cried, "'t was well for us
The Northwind stole the flour."

"Perhaps," exclaimed the cautious crone,
"The story may be true;
'T is mighty little good, I ween,
Your table-cloth can do."

And now the younker spread it forth,
And tried the spell. Alas!
'T was but a common table-cloth,
And nothing came to pass.

Then to the Northwind, far away,
He sped with might and main;
"Your table-cloth is good for naught;
I want my flour again!"

"I have it not," the Northwind growled,
"But, for your lack of bread,
I give to you this little goat,
'T will serve you well instead.

"For you have but to tell him this: —
'Make money, Master Bill!'
And he will give you golden coins,
As many as you will."

The lad received the magic goat
With wonder and delight,
And thanked the donor heartily,
As well, indeed, he might.

Returning homeward, at the inn
Just half his journey through,
He fain must show his little goat,
And what the goat could do.

So while he slept the knavish host
Went slyly to the shed,
And stole the goat, — but shrewdly placed
Another in his stead.

Unknowing what the rogue had done,
The youth went on his way,
And reached his weary journey's end
Just at the close of day.

He showed the dame his magic goat,
And told her of his power;
"Good sooth!" he cried, "'t was well for us
The Northwind stole the flour."

"I much misdoubt," the dame replied,
"Your wondrous tale is true;
'T is little good, for hungry folk,
Your silly goat can do!"

"Good Master Bill," the lad exclaimed,
"Make money!" but, alas!
'T was nothing but a common goat,
And nothing came to pass.

Then to the Northwind, angrily,
He sped with might and main;
"Your foolish goat is good for naught;
I want my flour again!"

"I have it not," the Northwind growled,
"Nor can I give you aught,
Except this cudgel, — which, indeed,
A magic charm has got;

"For you have but to tell it this:
'My cudgel, hit away!'
And, till you bid it stop again,
The cudgel will obey."

Returning home, he stopt at night
Where he had lodged before;
And feigning to be fast asleep,
He soon began to snore.

And when the host would steal the staff,
The sleeper muttered, "Stay,
I see what you would fain be at;
Good cudgel, hit away!"

The cudgel thumped about his ears,
Till he began to cry,
'O stop the staff, for mercy's sake!
Or I shall surely die!"

But still the cudgel thumped away
Until the rascal said,
"I 'll give you back the cloth and goat,
O spare my broken head!"

And so it was the lad reclaimed
His table-cloth and goat;
And, growing rich, at length became
A man of famous note;

He kept his mother tenderly,
And cheered her waning life;
And married — as you may suppose —
A princess for a wife;

And while he lived had ever near,
To favor worthy ends,
A cudgel for his enemies,
And money for his friends.

THE BLIND MEN AND THE ELEPHANT.

A HINDOO FABLE.

I.

It was six men of Indostan
To learning much inclined,
Who went to see the Elephant
(Though all of them were blind),
That each by observation
Might satisfy his mind.

II.

The *First* approached the Elephant,
And happening to fall

Against his broad and sturdy side,
At once began to bawl:
"God bless me! but the Elephant
Is very like a wall!"

III.

The *Second*, feeling of the tusk,
Cried, "Ho! what have we here
So very round and smooth and sharp?
To me 't is mighty clear
This wonder of an Elephant
Is very like a spear!"

IV.

The *Third* approached the animal,
And happening to take
The squirming trunk within his hands,
Thus boldly up and spake:
"I see," quoth he, "the Elephant
Is very like a snake!"

V.

The *Fourth* reached out his eager hand,
And felt about the knee.
"What most this wondrous beast is like
Is mighty plain," quoth he;
"'T is clear enough the Elephant
Is very like a tree!"

VI.

The *Fifth*, who chanced to touch the ear,
Said: "E'en the blindest man
Can tell what this resembles most;
Deny the fact who can,
This marvel of an Elephant
Is very like a fan!"

VII.

The *Sixth* no sooner had begun
About the beast to grope,
Than, seizing on the swinging tail
That fell within his scope,
"I see," quoth he, "the Elephant
Is very like a rope!"

VIII.

And so these men of Indostan
Disputed loud and long,
Each in his own opinion
Exceeding stiff and strong,
Though each was partly in the right,
And all were in the wrong!

MORAL.

So oft in theologic wars,
The disputants, I ween,
Rail on in utter ignorance
Of what each other mean,
And prate about an Elephant
Not one of them has seen!

THE TREASURE OF GOLD.

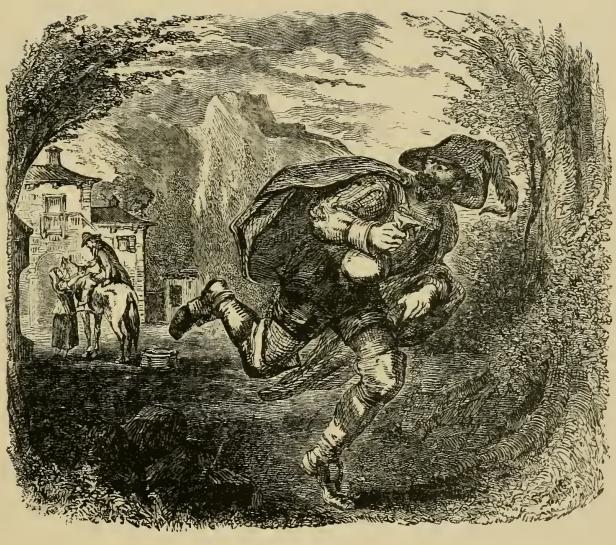
A LEGEND OF ITALY.

I.

A BEAUTIFUL story, my darlings,
Though exceedingly quaint and old,
Is a tale I have read in Italian,
Entitled, The Treasure of Gold.

II.

There lived near the town of Bologna
A widow of virtuous fame,



Alone with her only daughter, —
Madonna Lucrezia by name.

III.

A lady whom changing fortune
Had numbered among the poor;
And she kept an inn by the wayside,
For the use of peasant and boor.

IV.

One day at the door of the tavern
Three roving banditti appeared,
And one was a wily Venetian,
To guess by his curious beard.

V.

And he spoke to the waiting hostess
In phrases exceedingly fine,
And sat himself down with his fellows,
And called for a flagon of wine.

VI.

At length, after deeply discoursing
In voices suspiciously low,
The travellers rose from the table,
And made preparation to go.

VII.

"Madonna," up spoke the Venetian,
"Pray do us the kindness to hold
Awhile, for our better convenience,
This snug little treasure of gold."

VIII.

"Indeed," said the smiling Lucrezia,
"You 're welcome to leave it, — but stay;
I have never a lock in my hovel,
And the bag may be stolen away.

IX.

"Besides," said the woman, "consider,
There 's no one the fact to attest;
In pledge for so precious a treasure
You have only my word, at the best."

X.

"In faith!" said the civil Venetian,
"We have n't a morsel of fear;
But to guard against awkward mischances,
Let the matter in writing appear."

XI.

And this was a part of the writing
She gave the banditti to hold:
"Not to one, nor to two, but to all
Will I render the treasure of gold."

XII.

Now the robbers were scarcely departed
When the cunning Venetian came back,
With, "Madam, allow me the favor
Of putting my seal to the sack."

XIII.

But the moment she gave him the treasure,
A horseman rode up, and behold!
While the woman went out to attend him,
The villain ran off with the gold!

XIV.

"Alas!" cried the widow, in anguish,
"Alas for my daughter forlorn;
I would we had perished together,
The day Giannetta was born!"

XV.

In sooth, she had reason for sorrow,
Although it were idle to weep;
She was sued in the court of Bologna
For the money she promised to keep.

XVI.

"Now go, Giannetta," she faltered,
"To one that is versed in the laws;
But stop at the shrine of the Virgin,
And beg her to favor our cause."

XVII.

Alas for Madonna Lucrezia!
In vain Giannetta applied
To each lawyer of note in the city;
They were all on the opposite side!

XVIII.

At last, as the sorrowing maiden
Sat pondering her misery over,
And breathing a prayer to the Virgin,
She thought of Lorenzo, her lover;

XIX.

A student well read in the statutes,
According to common report,
But one who, from modest aversion,
Had never appeared in the court.

XX.

"I 'll try!" said the faithful Lorenzo,
After hearing her narrative through,
"And for strength in the hour of trial,
I 'll think, Giannetta, of you!"

XXI.

Next morning the judges assembled;
The claimants' attorneys were heard,
And gave a most plausible version
Of how the transaction occurred;

XXII.

Then showed, by the widow's confession,
She had taken the money to hold,
And proved that, though often requested,
She failed to surrender the gold.

XXIII.

The judges seemed fairly impatient
To utter the fatal decree,
When, lo! the young student Lorenzo
Stands up, and commences a plea: —

XXIV.

"Your Honors! I speak for the widow;
Some words have been (carelessly) said
Concerning a written agreement;
I ask that the writing be read."

XXV.

"Of course," said the Court, "it is proper
The writing appear in the case;

The sense of a written agreement
May give it a different face."

XXVI.

"Observe," said the student, "the bargain
To which we are willing to hold, —
'*Not to one, nor to two, but to all,*
Will I render the treasure of gold.'

XXVII.

"We stand by the writing, your Honors,
And candidly ask of you whether
These fellows can sue for their money
Till they come and demand it together?"

XXVIII.

And so it was presently settled,
For so did the judges decide;
And great was the joy of the widow,
And great was her daughter's pride.

XXIX.

And fast grew the fame of Lorenzo,
For making so clever a plea,
Till never in all Bologna
Was lawyer so wealthy as he.

XXX.

And he married his own Giannetta,
As the story is pleasingly told;
And such were the bane and the blessing
That came of the Treasure of Gold!

THE NOBLEMAN, THE FISHERMAN, AND THE PORTER.

AN ITALIAN LEGEND.

I.

It was a famous nobleman
Who flourished in the East,
And once, upon a holiday,
He made a goodly feast,
And summoned in of kith and kin
A hundred at the least.

II.

Now while they sat in social chat
Discoursing frank and free,
In came the steward, with a bow,
"A man below," said he,
"Has got, my lord, the finest fish
That ever swam the sea!"

III.

"Indeed!" exclaimed the nobleman,
"Then buy it in a trice;
The finest fish that ever swam
Must needs be very nice;
Go, buy it of the fisherman,
And never mind the price."

IV.

"And so I would," the steward said,
"But, faith, he would n't hear
A word of money for his fish,
(Was ever man so queer?)
But said he thought a hundred stripes
Could not be counted dear!"

V.

"Go bring him here," my lord replied;
"The man I fain would see;

A merry wag, by your report,
This fisherman must be."
"Go bring him here! Go bring him here!"
Cried all the company.

VI.

The steward did as he was bid,
When thus my lord began:
"For this fine fish what may you wish?
I 'll buy it, if I can."
"One hundred lashes on my back!"
Exclaimed the fisherman.

VII.

"Now, by the Rood! but this is good,"
The laughing lord replied;
"Well, let the fellow have his way;
Go, call a groom!" he cried;
"But let the payment he demands
Be modestly applied."

VIII.

He bared his back and took the lash
As it were merry play;
But at the fiftieth stroke, he said,
"Good master groom, I pray
Desist a moment, if you please;
I have a word to say.

IX.

"I have a partner in the case, —
The fellow standing there;
Pray take the jacket off his back,
And let him have his share;
That one of us should take the whole
Were surely hardly fair!"

X.

"A partner?" cried the nobleman,
"Who can the fellow mean?"
"I mean," replied the fisherman,
With countenance serene,
"*Your porter there!* the biggest knave
That ever yet was seen.

XI.

"The rogue who stopped me at the gate,
And would n't let me in
Until I swore to give him half
Of all my fish should win.
I've got my share! Pray let, my lord,
His payment now begin!"

XII.

"What you propose," my lord replied,
"Is nothing more than fair;
Here, groom, — lay on a hundred stripes,
And mind you do not spare.
The scurvy dog shall never say
He did n't get his share!"

XIII.

Then all that goodly company
They laughed with might and main,
The while beneath the stinging lash
The porter writhed in pain.
"So fare all villains," quoth my lord,
"Who seek dishonest gain!"

XIV.

Then, turning to the fisherman,
Who still was standing near,

He filled his hand with golden coins,
Some twenty sequins clear,
And bade him come and take the like
On each succeeding year.

THE DERVIS AND THE KING.

A TURKISH TALE.

A PIOUS Dervis, once upon a time,
Of all his sect the wisest and the best,
Journeyed, on foot, through many a foreign clime,
To serve his Master in some holy quest.

And so it chanced that on a certain day,
While plodding wearily along the road,
He saw before him, near the public way,
The house wherein the Tartar King abode.

Musing the while on some absorbing thought
That quite engrossed the pious pilgrim's mind,
The palace seemed — just what the Dervis sought —
A caravansary of the better kind.

Entering the palace by an open door,
Straight to the gallery the Dervis goes,
Lays down his meagre wallet on the floor,
And spreads his blanket for a night's repose.

It chanced the King, soon after, passing by,
Observed the man, and with an angry air,
As one who sees a robber or a spy,
Bade him avow what business brought him there.

"My business here," the Dervis meekly said,
"Is but to rest, as any traveller might;
In this good tavern I have made my bed,
And here I mean to tarry for the night."

"A caravansary — eh?" the King exclaimed
(His visage mantling with a royal grin),
"Now look around you, man, and be ashamed!
How *could* you take my palace for an inn?"

"Sire," said the Dervis (seeing his mistake),
"I purpose presently to answer this;
But grant me, first, the liberty to make
Some brief inquiries, if 't is not amiss.

"Pray tell me, Sire, who first resided here?"
"My ancestors, — as the tradition goes."
"Who next?" "My father, — that is very clear."
"Who next?" "Myself, — as everybody knows."

"And who — Heaven grant you many years to reign! —
Will occupy the house when you have done?"

"Why," said the monarch, "that
is very plain, —
Of course 't will be the Prince,
my only son!"

"Sire," said the Dervis, gravely,
"I protest, —
Whate'er the building you may
choose to call, —
A house that knows so many a
transient guest,
Is but a caravansary, after
all!"

THE MONARCH AND THE MARQUIS.

AN ORIENTAL LEGEND.

I.

It was a merry monarch
Who ruled a distant land,
And ever, for his pastime,
Some new device he planned,
And once, to all his servants,
He gave this queer command.

II.

Quoth he: "To every stranger
Who comes unto my court
Let a fried fish be given,
And of the finest sort;
Then mark the man's behavior,
And bring me due report.

III.

"If, when the man has eaten
The fish unto the bone,
The glutton turns it over, —
Then, by my royal throne,
For this, his misdemeanor,
The gallows shall atone!"

IV.

Now when this regal mandate,
According to report,
Had slain a score of strangers,
To serve the monarch's sport,
It chanced a gay young Marquis
Came to the royal court.

V.

His Majesty received him
As suited with his state,
But when he sat at dinner,
The fish was on the plate;
Alas! he turns it over,
Unconscious of his fate.

VI.

Then, to his dire amazement,
Three guardsmen, standing nigh,
Conveyed him straight to prison,
And plainly told him why, —
And how, in retribution,
That he was doomed to die!

VII.

The Marquis, filled with sorrow,
Implored the monarch's ruth,
Whereat the King relented
(A gracious deed, in sooth!)
And granted these conditions,
In pity of his youth: —

VIII.

That for three days the culprit
Should have the King's reprieve;
Also, to name three wishes
The prisoner had leave, —
One each succeeding morning, —
The which he should receive.

IX.

"Thanks!" said the grateful Mar-
quis,
"His Majesty is kind;

And, first, to wed his daughter
  Is what I have in mind;
Go, bid him fetch a parson
  The holy tie to bind."

X.

Now when the merry monarch
  This bold demand had heard,
With grief and indignation
  His royal breast was stirred;
But he had pledged his honor,
  And so he kept his word.

XI.

Now, if the first petition
  He reckoned rather bold,
What was the King's amazement
  To hear the second told, —
To wit, the monarch's treasure
  Of silver and of gold!

XII.

To beg the culprit's mercy
  This mighty King was fain;
But pleading and remonstrance
  Were uttered all in vain;
And so he gave the treasure
  It cost him years to gain.

XIII.

Sure ne'er was mortal monarch
  In such dismay as he!
He woke next morning early
  And went himself to see
What, in the name of wonder,
  The third demand would be.

XIV.

"I ask," replied the Marquis,
  "(My third and final wish),
That you should call the servants
  Who served the fatal dish,
And have the eyes extinguished
  That saw me turn the fish."

XV.

"Good!" said the monarch gayly,
  With obvious delight,
"What you demand, Sir Marquis,
  Is reasonable, quite;
That they should pay this forfeit
  Is nothing more than right.

XVI.

"How was it, — Mr. Chamberlain?"
  But he at once denied
That he had seen the culprit
  Turn up the other side;
"It must have been the Steward,"
  The Chamberlain replied.

XVII.

"Indeed! exclaimed the Steward,
  "It surely was n't I!
It must have been the Butler" —
  Who quickly made reply,
"It must have been the guardsmen,
  Unless the fellows lie!"

XVIII.

But they, in turn, protested,
  With plausible surprise,
(And dreadful imprecations,
  If they were telling lies!)
That nothing of the matter
  Had come before their eyes.

XIX.

"Good father," said the Princess,
  "I pray you ponder this,"
(And here she gave the monarch
  A reverential kiss,)
"My husband must be guiltless,
  If none saw aught amiss!"

XX.

The monarch frowned a little,
  And gravely shook his head:

"Your Marquis should be punished;
Well, — let him live," he said,
"For though he cheats the gallows,
The man, at least, is wed!"

THE CALIPH AND THE CRIPPLE.

AN ARABIAN TALE.

THE Caliph, Ben Akas, whose surname was "Wise,"
From the wisdom and wit he displayed,
One morning rode forth in a merchant's disguise
To see how his laws were obeyed.

While riding along, in a leisurely way,
A beggar came up to his side,
And said, "In the name of the Prophet, I pray
You 'll give a poor cripple a ride."

Ben Akas, amazed at the mendicant's prayer,
Asked where he was wishing to go.
"I'm going," he said, "to the neighboring fair;
But my crutches are wretchedly slow."

"Get up!" said the Caliph; "a saddle like this
Is hardly sufficient for two;
And yet, by the Prophet! — 't were greatly amiss
To snub a poor cripple like you."

The beggar got up, and together they rode
Till they came to the neighboring town,
When, hard by the house where the Cadi abode,
He bade his companion get down.

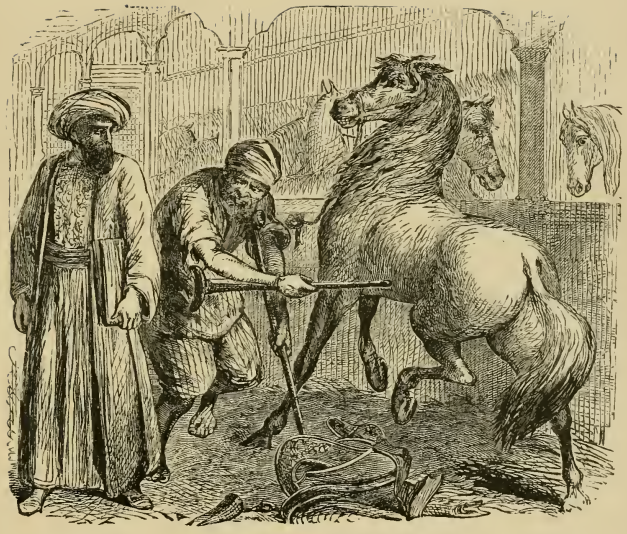
"Nay, get down *yourself!*" was the fellow's reply,
Without the least shame or remorse.
"Indeed!" said the Caliph, "and pray tell me why?"
Quoth the beggar, "To give me the horse!

"You know very well that the nag is my own;
And if you resort to the laws,
You do not imagine your story alone
Sufficient to carry the cause?

"The Cadi is reckoned the wisest of men,
And, looking at you and at me,
After hearing us both, 't is a hundred to ten
The cripple will get the decree."

"Very well!" said Ben Akas, astonished to hear
The impudent fellow's discourse,
"If the Cadi is wise, there is little to fear
But I soon shall recover my horse."

"Agreed!" said the beggar; "whate'er the decree,
The verdict shall find me content."
"As to that," said the other, "we 'll presently see."
And so to the Cadi they went.



It chanced that a cause was engrossing the Cadi,
Where a woman occasioned the strife;
And both parties claimed the identical lady
As being his own lawful wife.

The one was a peasant; a scholar the other;
And each made a speech in his turn;
But, what was a very particular pother,
The woman refused to be sworn.

"Enough for the present!" the Cadi declared,
"Come back in the morning," said he;
"And now" (to Ben Akas) "the Court is prepared
To hear what your grievance may be."

Ben Akas no sooner the truth had narrated
When the beggar as coolly replies:
"I swear, by the Prophet! the fellow has stated
A parcel of impudent lies!

"I was coming to market, and when I descried
A man by the wayside alone,
Looking weary and faint, why, I gave him a ride;
Now he swears that the horse is his own!"

"Very well," said the Judge, "let us go to the stable,
And each shall select in his turn."
Ben Akas went first, and was easily able
His favorite steed to discern.

The cripple went next; though the stable was full,
The true one was instantly shown.
"Your Honor," said he, "did you think me so dull
That I could n't distinguish my own?"

Next morning the Cadi came into the court,
And sat himself down at his ease;
And thither the suitors and people resort
To list to the Judge's decrees.

First calling the scholar, who sued for his spouse,
His Honor thus settled the doubt:
"The woman is yours; take her home to your house,
And don't let her often go out."

Then calling before him Ben Akas, whose cause
Stood next in the calendar's course,
He said: "By the Prophet's inflexible laws,
Let the merchant recover his horse!

"And as for the beggar, I further decide
His villany fairly has earned
A good hundred lashes well laid on his hide;
Meshallah! The court is adjourned."

Ben Akas that night sought the Cadi's abode,
And said: "'T is the Caliph you see.
Though hither, indeed, as a merchant I rode,
I am Abou Ben Akas to thee."

The Cadi, abashed, made the lowest of bows,
And, kissing his Majesty's hand,
Cried: "Great is the honor you do to my house;
I wait for your royal command!"

"I fain would possess," was the Caliph's reply,
"Your wisdom; so tell me, I pray,
How your Honor discovered where justice might lie
In the causes decided to-day."

"Why, as to the woman," the Cadi replied,
"It was easily settled, I think;
Just taking the lady a moment aside,
I said, 'Fill my standish with ink.'

"And quick, at the order, the bottle was taken,
With a dainty and dexterous hold;
The standish was washed; the fluid was shaken;
New cotton put in for the old—"

"I see!" said the Caliph; "the story is pleasant;
Of course it was easy to tell
The scholar swore truly; the spouse of a peasant
Could never have done it so well.

"And now for the horse?" "That was harder, I own,
For, mark you, the beggarly elf
(However the rascal may chance to have known)
Knew the palfrey as well as yourself.

"But the truth was apparent, the moment I learned
What the animal thought of the two;
The impudent cripple he savagely spurned,
But was plainly delighted with you!"

Ben Akas sat musing and silent awhile,
As one whom devotion employs;
Then, raising his head with a heavenly smile,
He said, in a reverent voice:—

"Sure Allah is good and abundant in grace!
Thy wisdom is greater than mine;
I would that the Caliph might rule in his place
As well as thou servest in thine!"

THE UGLY AUNT.[5]

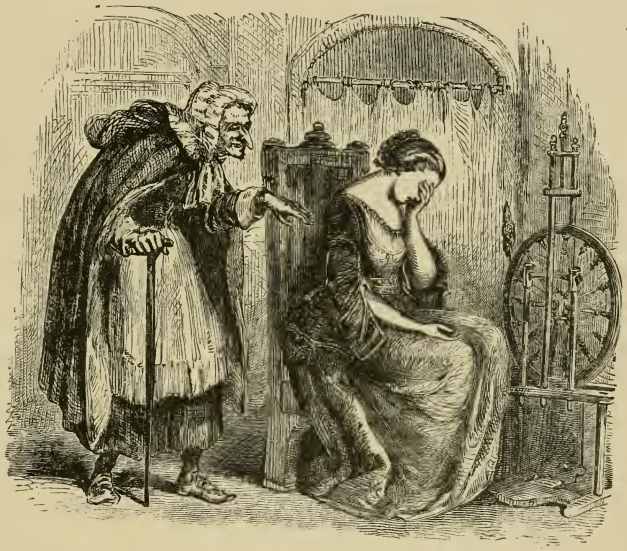
A NORWEGIAN TALE.

I.

It was a little maiden
Lived long and long ago,
(Though when it was, and where it was,
I 'm sure I do not know,)
And her face was all the fortune
This maiden had to show.

II.

And yet—what many people
Will think extremely rare
In one who, like this maiden,
Ne'er knew a mother's care—


GUILT

The neighbors all asserted
That she was good as fair.

III.

"Alack!" exclaimed the damsel,
While bitter tears she shed,
"I 'm little skilled to labor,
And yet I must be fed;
I fain by daily service
Would earn my daily bread."

IV.

And so she sought a palace,
Where dwelt a mighty queen,
And when the royal lady
The little maid had seen,
She loved her for her beauty,
Despite her lowly mien.

V.

Not long she served her Majesty
Ere jealousy arose
(Because she was the favorite,
As you may well suppose),
And all the other servants
Became her bitter foes.

VI.

And so these false companions,
In envy of her face,
Contrived a wicked stratagem
To bring her to disgrace,
And fill her soul with sorrow,
And rob her of her place.

VII.

They told her royal Majesty
(Most arrant liars they!)
That often, in their gossiping,
They 'd heard the maiden say
That she could spin a pound of flax
All in a single day!

VIII.

"Indeed!" exclaimed her Majesty,
"I 'm fond of spinning, too;
So come, my little maiden,
And make your boasting true:
Or else your foolish vanity
You presently may rue!"

IX.

Alas! the hapless damsel
Was now afflicted sore,
No mother e'er had taught her
In such ingenious lore;
A spinning-wheel, in all her life,
She ne'er had seen before!

X.

But fearing much to tell the queen
How she had been belied,
She tried to spin upon the wheel,
And still in vain she tried;
And so — 't was all that she could do —
She sat her down and cried.

XI.

Now while she thus laments her fate
In sorrow deep and wild,
A beldam stands before her view,
And says, in accents mild:
"What ails thee now, my pretty one,
Say, what 's the matter, child?"

XII.

Soon as she heard the piteous case,
"Cheer up!" the beldam said,
"I 'll spin for thee the pound of flax,
And thou shalt go to bed,
If only thou wilt call me 'aunt,'
The day that thou art wed!"

XIII.

The maiden promised true and fair,
And when the day was done,

The queen went in to see the task,
And found it fairly spun.
Quoth she, "I love thee passing well,
And thou shalt wed my son.

XIV.

"For one who spins so well as thee
(In sooth! 't is wondrous fine!)
With beauty, too, so very rare,
And goodness such as thine,
Should be the daughter of a queen,
And I will have thee mine!"

XV.

Now when the wedding-day had come,
And, decked in royal pride,
Around the smoking table sat
The bridegroom and the bride,
With all the royal kinsfolk,
And many guests beside,

XVI.

In came a beldam, with a frisk;
Was ever dame so bold?
Or one so lean and wrinkled,
So ugly and so old,
Or with a nose so very long
And shocking to behold?

XVII.

Now while they sat in wonderment
This curious dame to see,
She said unto the Princess,
As bold as bold could be:
"Good morrow, gentle lady!"
"Good morrow, *Aunt!*" quoth she.

XVIII.

The Prince with gay demeanor,
But with an inward groan,
Then bade her sit at table,
And said, in friendly tone,
"If you 're my bride's relation,
Why, then you are my own!"

XIX.

When dinner now was ended,
As you may well suppose,
The Prince still thought about his *Aunt*,
And still his wonder rose
Where could the ugly beldam
Have got so long a nose.

XX.

At last he plainly asked her,
Before that merry throng,
And she as plainly answered
(Nor deemed his freedom wrong):
"'T was spinning, in my girlhood,
That made my nose so long."

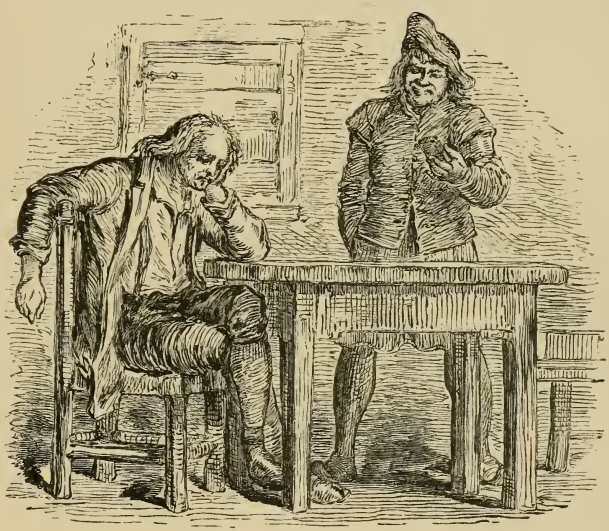
XXI.

"Indeed!" exclaimed his Highness,
And then and there he swore:
"Though spinning made me husband
To her whom I adore,
Lest she should spoil her beauty,
Why, she shall spin no more!"

THE THREE GIFTS.

A TALE OF NORTH GERMANY.

THREE gentlemen mounted their horses one day,
And far in the country they rode,
Till they came to a cottage, that stood by the way,
Where an honest old weaver abode.



This honest old weaver was wretchedly poor,
Yet he never was surly or sad;
He welcomed the travellers into his door,
And gave them the best that he had.

They ate and they drank, till the weaver began
To fear that they never would cease;
But when they had finished, they gave to the man
A hundred gold guineas apiece.

Then the gentlemen mounted their horses again,
And, bidding the weaver "Good night,"
Went dashing away over valley and plain,
And were presently lost to his sight.

Sure never was weaver so happy before,
And never seemed guineas so bright;
He counted the pieces a hundred times o'er,
With more than a miser's delight.

Then snug in some rags he hid them away,
As if he had got them by stealth,
Lest his meddlesome wife, who was absent that day,
Should know of his wonderful wealth.

Soon after, a travelling rag-dealer came,
The rags in the bundle were sold,
And with them (the woman was little to blame)
The three hundred guineas of gold.

When a calendar year had vanished and fled,
The gentlemen came as before.
"Now how does it happen," they moodily said,
"We find you so wretchedly poor?"

"Alas!" said the weaver, "this many a day
The money is missing, in sooth;
In a bundle of rags it was hidden away,
('Fore God! I am telling the truth.)

"But once, in my absence, a rag-dealer came,
The rags in the bundle were sold,
And with them (the woman was surely to blame)
The three hundred guineas of gold."

"It was foolishly done," the gentlemen swore;
"Now, prithee, be careful of these."
And they gave him again, the same as before,
A hundred gold guineas apiece.

Then the gentlemen mounted their horses again,
And, bidding the weaver "Good night,"
Went dashing away over valley and plain,
And were presently lost to his sight.

"I' faith," said the weaver, "no wonder they chid;
But now I am wiser, I trust."
So the three hundred guineas he carefully hid
Far down in a barrel of dust.

But soon, in his absence, a dustman came,
The dust in the barrel was sold;
And with it (the woman was little to blame)
The three hundred guineas of gold.

When a calendar year had vanished and fled,
The gentlemen came as before.
"Now how does it happen," they angrily said,
"We find you so wretchedly poor?"

"Was ever," he cried, "so luckless a wight?
As surely as Heaven is just,
The money I hid from my spouse's sight
Far down in a barrel of dust;

"But when I was absent the dustman came,
The dust in the barrel was sold,
And with it (the woman was surely to blame)
The three hundred guineas of gold."

"Take that for your folly!" the gentlemen said;
"Was ever so silly a wight?"
And they tossed on the table a lump of lead,
And were presently out of his sight.

"'T is plain," said the weaver, "they meant to flout,
And little I marvel; alas! —
My wife is a fool; and there is n't a doubt
That I am an arrant ass!"

While thus he was musing in sorrow and shame,
And wishing that he were dead,
Into his cottage a fisherman came
To borrow a lump of lead.

"Ah! here," he cried, "is the thing I wish
To mend my broken net;
Will you give it me for the finest fish
That I this day may get?"

"With all my heart!" the weaver replies;
And so the fisherman brought
That night a fish of wondrous size, —
The finest that he had caught.

He opened the fish, when lo and behold!
He found a precious stone, —
A diamond large as the lead he sold,
And bright as the morning sun!

For a thousand guineas the stone he sold
(It was worth a hundred more),
And never, 't is said, in bliss or gold,
Was weaver so rich before.

But often — to keep her sway, no doubt,
As a genuine woman must —
The wife would say, "*I* brought it about
By selling the rags and dust!"

THE WIFE'S REVENGE.

FROM THE SPANISH.

I.

"ONCE on a time" there flourished in Madrid
A painter, clever, and the pet of Fame,
Don José, — but the rest were better hid;
So please accept the simple Christian name,
Only, to keep my verse from being prosy,
Pray mind your *Spanish*, and pronounce it, *Hozy*.

II.

Don José, — who, it seems, had lately won
Much praise and cash, — to crown a lucky week,
Resolved for once to have a little fun,
To ease him of his easel, — so to speak;
And so, in honor of his limning labors,
He gave a party to his artist-neighbors.

III.

A strange affair; for not a woman came
To grace the table; e'en the painter's spouse,
Donna Casilda, a most worthy dame,
Was, rather roughly, told to quit the house,
And go and gossip, for the evening, down
Among her cousins in the lower town.

IV.

The lady went; but presently came back,
For mirth or mischief, with a jolly cousin,
And sought a closet, where an ample crack
Revealed the revellers, sitting, by the dozen,
Discussing wine and — Art? — No, "women folks!"
In senseless satire and indecent jokes.

V.

"Women?" said José, "what do women know
Of poetry or painting?" ("Hear him talk!"
Whispered the list'ners.) "When did woman show
A ray of genius in the higher walk
Of either? No; to *them* the gods impart
Arts, — quite enough, — but deuce a bit of Art!"

VI.

("Wretch!" cried the ladies.) "Yes," said José, "take
Away from women love-intrigues and all
The cheap disguises they are wont to make
To hide their spots, — they 'd sing extremely small!"
("Fool!" said his spouse, "we' ll settle, by and by,
Who sings the smallest, villain, — you or I!")

VII.

To make the matter worse, the jovial guests
Were duly mindful not to be exceeded

In coarse allusions and unsavory jests,
But — following José — talked, of course, as *he* did;
I 've been, myself, to many a bachelor-party,
And found them, mainly, less refined than hearty.

VIII.

The party over, full of inward ire,
Casilda plotted, silently and long,
Some fitting vengeance. Women seldom tire
In their resentments, whether right or wrong:
In classic authors we are often warned
There 's naught so savage as a "woman scorned."

IX.

Besides, Casilda, be it known, had much
Of what the French applaud — and not amiss —
As *savoir-faire* (I do not know the Dutch);
The literal Germans call it *Mutterwiss*,
The Yankees *gumption*, and the Grecians *nous*, —
A useful thing to have about the house.

X.

At length the lady hit upon a plan
Worthy of Hermes for its deep disguise;
She got a carpenter, — a trusty man, —
To make a door, and of a certain size,
With curious carvings and heraldic bands,
And bade him wait her ladyship's commands.

XI.

Then falling sick, — as gentle ladies know
The ready art, unless romances lie, —
She groaned aloud, and bade Don, José go,
And quickly, too, — or she should surely die, —
And fetch her nurse, — a woman who abode
Some three miles distant by the nearest road.

XII.

With many a frown and many a bitter curse
He heard the summons. 'T was a pretty hour,
He said, to go a-gadding for a nurse!
At twelve at night! — and in a drenching shower!
He 'd never go, — unless the devil sent, —
And then Don José took his hat and went!

XIII.

A long, long hour he paced the dirty street
Where dwelt the nurse, but could n't find the place;
For he had lost the number; and his feet,
Though clad in leather, made a bootless chase;
He fain had questioned some one; all in vain, —
The very thieves were fearful of the rain!

XIV.

Returning homeward from his weary tramp,
He reached his house, — or where his house should be;
When, by the glimmer of the entry-lamp,
Don José saw — and marvelled much to see —
An ancient, strange, and most fantastic door,
The like whereof he 'd never seen before!

XV.

"Now, by Our Lady! this is mighty queer!"
Cried José, staring at the graven wood,
"I know my dwelling stands exactly here;
At least, I 'm certain here is where it stood
Two hours ago, when (here he gave a curse)
Donna Casilda sent me for the nurse.

XVI.

"I know the houses upon either side;
There stands the dwelling of the undertaker;
Here my good friend Morena lived and died;
And *here* 's the shop of old Trappal, the baker;
And yet, as sure as iron is n't brass,
'*T is not my door*, or I 'm a precious ass!

XVII.

"However, I will knock"; and so he did,
And called, "Casilda!" loud enough to rouse
The very dullest watchman in Madrid;
But woke, instead, the porter of the house,
Who rudely asked him, Where he got his beer?
And bade him, "Go! — there 's no Casilda here!"

XVIII.

Don José crossed himself in dire dismay,
Lest he had lost his reason, or his sight;
At least 't was certain he had lost his way;
And, hoping sleep might set the matter right,
He sought and found the dwelling of a friend
Who lived in town, — quite at the other end.

XIX.

Next morning José, rising with the sun,
Returned, once more, to seek the missing house;
And there it stood, as it had always done,
And there stood also his indignant spouse
With half her city cousins at her back,
Waiting to put poor José on the rack.

XX.

"A charming husband, *you!*" the dame began,
"To leave your spouse in peril of her life,
For tavern revellers! You 're a pretty man,
Thus to desert your lawful, wedded wife,

And spend your nights — O villain! — don't explain,
I 'll be revenged if there is law in Spain!"

XXI.

"Nay, Madam, hear me! — just a single word —"
And then he told her of his fruitless search
To find the beldam; and of what occurred, —
How his own house had left him in the lurch!
Here such a stream of scorn came pouring in,
Don José's voice was smothered in the din.

XXII.

"Nay," said Casilda, "*that* will never do;
Your own confession plainly puts you down!
Say you were tipsy (it were nothing new),
And spent the night carousing through the town
With other topers; *that* may be received;
But, faith! *your* tale will never be believed!"

XXIII.

Crazed with the clamor of the noisy crew
All singing chorus to the injured dame,
Say, what the deuce could poor Don José do? —
He prayed for pardon, and confessed his shame;
And gave no dinners, in his future life,
Without remembering to invite his wife!

THE DERVIS AND HIS ENEMIES.

A TURKISH LEGEND.

I.

NEAR Babylon, in ancient times,
There dwelt a humble, pious Dervis
Who lived on alms, and spent his days
In exhortation, prayer, and praise, —
Devoted to the Prophet's service.

II.

To him, one day, a neighbor sent
A gift extremely rare and pleasant, —
A fatted ox of goodly size;
Whereat the grateful Dervis cries,
"Allah be praised for this fine present!"

III.

So large a gift were hard to hide;
Nor was he careful to conceal it;
Indeed, a thief had chanced to spy
The ox as he was passing by,
And so resolved to go and steal it.

IV.

Now while he sought, with this intent,
The owner's humble habitation,

He met a stranger near the place,
Who seemed, to judge him by his face,
A person of his own vocation.

V.

And so the thief, as one who knew
What to a brother-rogue was owing,
Politely bade the man "Good day,"
And asked him, in a friendly way,
His name, and whither he was going.

VI.

The stranger bowed, and gruffly said:
"My name is Satan, at your service!
And I am going, Sir, to kill
A man who lives near yonder hill, —
A fellow called the 'Holy Dervis.'

VII.

"I hate him as a mortal foe;
For, spite of me and Nature's bias,
There's scarce a knave in all these parts
But this vile Dervis, by his arts,
Has made him honest, chaste, and pious!"

VIII.

"Sir, I am yours!" the thief replied;
"I scorn to live by honest labor;
And even now I 'm on my way
To steal an ox received to-day
By this same Dervis from a neighbor."

IX.

"I 'm glad to see you," said the fiend,
"You seem, indeed, a younger brother;
And, faith! in such a case as this,
It certainly were much amiss
If we should fail to aid each other!"

X.

While thus discoursing, sooth to say,
Each knave had formed the resolution
(Lest aught occur to mar his plan)
To be himself the foremost man
To put his scheme in execution.

XI.

"For," said the thief unto himself,
"Before his work is half completed,
The Dervis, murdered where he lies,
Will rouse the neighbors with his cries,
And so my plan will be defeated!"

XII.

"If *he* goes first," the other thought,
"His cursed ox may chance to bellow;
Or else, in breaking through the door,
He 'll wake the Dervis with the roar,
And I shall fail to kill the fellow!"

XIII.

So when they reached the hermit's house,
The devil whispered, quite demurely,

"While I go in, you stand without;
My job despatched, we 'll go about
The other business more securely."

XIV.

"Nay," said the robber, "I protest
I don't at all approve the measure;
This seems to me the better plan:
Just wait till I have robbed the man,
Then you may kill him at your leisure."

XV.

Now when, at last, they both refused
To yield the point in controversy,
To such a height the quarrel rose,
From words and threats they came to blows,
And beat each other without mercy!

XVI.

Perceiving that the devil's strokes
Surpassed his own in weight and number,
The thief, before he took to flight,
Cried, "Murder! help!" with all his might,
And roused the Dervis from his slumber.

XVII.

"Thieves! thieves!" cried Satan, going off
(To figure at some tavern-revel).
And so by this fraternal strife
The Dervis saved his ox and life,
Despite the robber and the devil!

RAMPSINITUS AND THE ROBBERS.

AN EGYPTIAN TALE.

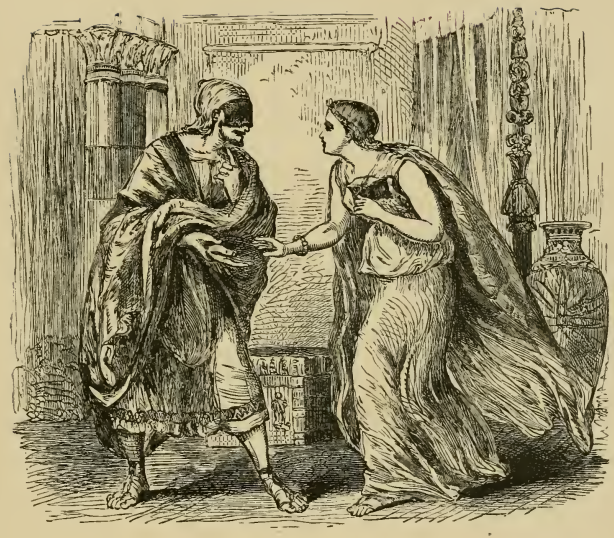
In charming old Herodotus,
If you were college-bred,
The Tale of Rampsinitus
You may, perchance, have read;
If not, 't is little matter, —
You may read it here instead.

This Rampsinitus was a king
Who lived in days of old,
And, finding that his treasury
Was quite too small to hold
His jewels and his money-bags
Of silver and of gold,

He built a secret chamber,
With this intent alone,
(That is, he got an architect
And caused it to be done,)
A most substantial structure
Of mortar and of stone.

A very solid building
It appeared to every eye,
Except the master-mason's,
Who plainly could espy
One stone that fitted loosely
When the masonry was dry.

A dozen years had vanished,
When, in the common way,
The architect was summoned
His final debt to pay;



And thus unto his children
The dying man did say: —

"Come hither now, my darling sons,
Come, list my children twain,
I have a little secret
I am going to explain;
'T is a comfort, now I 'm dying,
That I have n't lived in vain."

And then he plainly told them
Of the trick that he had done;
How in the royal chamber
He had put a sliding stone, —
"You 'll find it near the bottom,
On the side that 's next the sun.

"Now I feel that I am going;
Swift ebbs the vital tide;
No longer in this wicked world
My spirit may abide."
And so this worthy gentleman
Turned up his toes and died.

It was n't long before the sons
Improved the father's hint,
And searched the secret chamber
To discover what was in 't;
And found, by self-promotion,
They were "Masters of the Mint!"

At length King Rampsinitus
Perceived, as well he might,
His caskets and his money-bags
Were getting rather light;
"And yet," quoth he, "my bolts and bars
Are all exactly right!

"I wonder how the cunning dog
Has managed to get in;
However, it is clear enough,
I 'm losing lots of tin;
I 'll try the virtue of a trap
Before the largest bin!"

In came the thief that very night,
And soon the other chap,
Who waited at the opening,
On hearing something snap,
Went in and found his brother
A-sitting in the trap.

"You see me in a pretty fix!"
The gallant fellow said;
"'T is better, now, that one should die
Than two of us be dead.
Lest both should be detected,
Cut off my foolish head!"

"Indeed," replied the other,
"Such a cut were hardly kind,
And to obey your order,
I am truly disinclined;
But, as you 're the elder brother,
I suppose I ought to mind."

So, with his iron hanger
He severed, at a slap,
The noddle of the victim,
Which he carried through the gap,
And left the bleeding body
A-sitting in the trap.

His Majesty's amazement
Of course was very great,
On entering the chamber
That held his cash and plate,
To find the robber's body
Without a bit of pate!

To solve the mighty mystery
Was now his whole intent;

And everywhere, to find the head,
His officers were sent;
But every man came back again
No wiser than he went.

At last he set a dozen men
The mystery to trace;
And bade them watch the body
In a very public place,
And note what signs of sorrow
They might see in any face.

The robber, guessing what it meant,
Was naturally shy;
And, though he mingled in the crowd,
Took care to "mind his eye,"
For fear his brother's body-guard
His sorrow should espy.

"I 'll cheat 'em yet!" the fellow said;
And so that very night,
He planned a cunning stratagem
To get the soldiers "tight";
And steal away his brother's trunk
Before the morning light.

He got a dozen asses,
And put upon their backs
As many loads as donkeys
Of wine in leather sacks;
Then set the bags a-leaking
From a dozen little cracks.

Then going where the soldiers
Were keeping watch and ward,
The fellows saw the leaking wine
With covetous regard,
And straightway fell a-drinking,
And drank extremely hard.

The owner stormed and scolded
With well-affected spunk,
But still they kept a-drinking
Till all of them were drunk;
And so it was the robber
Stole off his brother's trunk!

Now when King Rampsinitus
Had heard the latest news,
'T is said his royal Majesty
Expressed his royal views
In language such as gentlemen
Are seldom known to use.

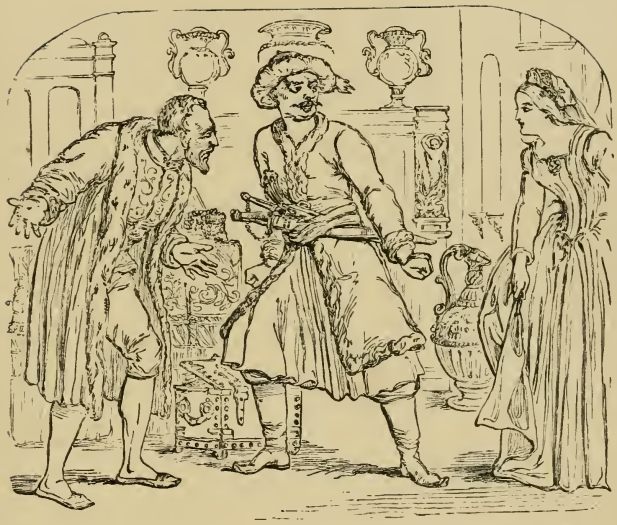
Now when a year had vanished,
He formed another plan
To catch the chap who 'd stolen
The mutilated man;
And summoning the Princess,
His Majesty began: —

"My daughter, hold a masquerade,
And offer — as in fun —
Five kisses (in your chamber)
To every mother's son
Who 'll tell the shrewdest mischief
That he has ever done.[6]

"If you chance to find the robber
By the trick that I have planned,
Remember, on the instant,
To seize him by the hand,
Then await such further orders
As your father may command."

The Princess made the party,
Without the least dissent.
'T was a general invitation,
And everybody went, —
The robber with the others,
Though he guessed the king's intent.

Now when the cunning robber
Was questioned, like the rest,



He said: "Your Royal Highness,
I solemnly protest
Of all my subtle rogueries,
I scarce know which is best;

"But I venture the opinion,
'T was a rather pretty job,
When, having with my hanger
Cut off my brother's nob,
I managed from the soldiers
His headless trunk to rob!"

And now the frightened Princess
Gave a very heavy groan,
For, to her consternation,
The cunning thief had flown,
And left the hand she grappled
Still lying in her own!

(For he a hand had borrowed,
'T is needful to be said,
From the body of a gentleman
That recently was dead,
And *that* he gave the Princess
The moment that he fled!)

Then good King Rampsinitus
Incontinently swore
That this paragon of robbers
He would persecute no more
For such a clever rascal
Had never lived before!

And in that goodly company,
His Majesty declared
That if the thief would show himself
His person should be spared,
And with his only daughter
In marriage should be paired!

And when King Rampsinitus
Had run his mortal lease,
He left them in his testament
Just half a crown apiece;
May every modest merit
Thus flourish and increase!

POOR TARTAR.

A HUNGARIAN LEGEND.

I.

THERE 's trouble in Hungary, now, alas!
There 's trouble on every hand!
For that terrible man,
The Tartar Khan,
Is ravaging over the land!

II.

He is riding forth with his ugly men,
To rob and ravish and slay;
For deeds like those,
You may well suppose,
Are quite in the Tartar-way.

III.

And now he comes, that terrible chief,
To a mansion grand and old;
And he peers about
Within and without,
And what do his eyes behold?

IV.

A thousand cattle in fold and field,
And sheep all over the plain;
And noble steeds
Of rarest breeds,
And beautiful crops of grain.

V.

But finer still is the hoarded wealth
That his ravished eyes behold;
In silver plate
Of wondrous weight,
And jewels of pearl and gold!

VI.

A nobleman owns this fine estate;
And when the robber he sees,
'T is not very queer
He quakes with fear,
And trembles a bit in the knees.

VII.

He quakes in fear of his precious life,
And, scarce suppressing a groan,
"Good Tartar," says he,
"Whatever you see
Be pleased to reckon your own!"

VIII.

The Khan looked round in a leisurely way
As one who is puzzled to choose;
When, cocking his ear,
He chanced to hear
The creak of feminine shoes.

IX.

The Tartar smiled a villanous smile,
When, like a lily in bloom,
A lady fair
With golden hair
Came gliding into the room.

X.

The robber stared with amorous eyes;
Was ever so winning a face?
And long he gazed
As one amazed
To see such beauty and grace.

XI.

A moment more, and the lawless man
Had seized his struggling prey,
Without remorse,
And taking horse
He bore the lady away.

XII.

"Now Heaven be praised!" the nobleman cried,
"For many a mercy to me!
I bow me still
Unto his will, —
God pity the Tartar!" said he.

THE FOUR MISFORTUNES.

A HEBREW TALE.

I.

A pious Rabbi, forced by heathen hate
To quit the boundaries of his native land,
Wandered abroad, submissive to his fate,
Through pathless woods and wastes of burning sand.

II.

A patient ass, to bear him in his flight,
A dog, to guard him from the robber's stealth,
A lamp, by which to read the law at night, —
Was all the pilgrim's store of worldly wealth.

III.

At set of sun he reached a little town,
And asked for shelter and a crumb of food;
But every face repelled him with a frown,
And so he sought a lodging in the wood.

IV.

"'T is very hard," the weary traveller said,
"And most inhospitable, I protest,
To send me fasting to this forest bed;
But God is good, and means it for the best!"

V.

He lit his lamp to read the sacred law,
Before he spread his mantle for the night;
But the wind rising with a sudden flaw,
He read no more, — the gust put out the light.

VI.

"'T is strange," he said, "'t is very strange, indeed,
That ere I lay me down to take my rest,
A chapter of the law I may not read, —
But God is good, and all is for the best."

VII.

With these consoling words the Rabbi tries
To sleep, his head reposing on a log,
But, ere he fairly shut his drowsy eyes,
A wolf came up and killed his faithful dog.

VIII.

"What new calamity is this?" he cried;
"My honest dog — a friend who stood the test
When others failed — lies murdered at my side!
Well, — God is good, and means it for the best!"

IX.

Scarce had the Rabbi spoken, when, alas!
As if, at once, to crown his wretched lot,
A hungry lion pounced upon the ass,
And killed the faithful donkey on the spot.

X.

"Alas! alas!" the weeping Rabbi said,
"Misfortune haunts me like a hateful guest;
My dog is gone, and now my ass is dead.
Well, — God is good, and all is for the best!"

XI.

At dawn of day, imploring heavenly grace,
Once more he sought the town; but all in vain;

A band of robbers had despoiled the place,
And all the churlish citizens were slain!

XII.

"Now God be praised!" the grateful Rabbi cried,
"If I had tarried in the town to rest,
I too, with these poor villagers, had died.
Sure, God is good, and all is for the best!

XIII.

"Had not the wanton wind put out my lamp,
By which the sacred law I would have read,
The light had shown the robbers to my camp,
And here the villains would have left me dead.

XIV.

"Had not my faithful animals been slain,
Their noise, no doubt, had drawn the robbers near,
And so their master, it is very plain,
Instead of them, had fallen murdered here.

XV.

"Full well I see that this hath happened so
To put my faith and patience to the test.
Thanks to His name! for now I surely know
That God is good, and all is for the best!"

THE WANDERING JEW.[7]

A BALLAD.

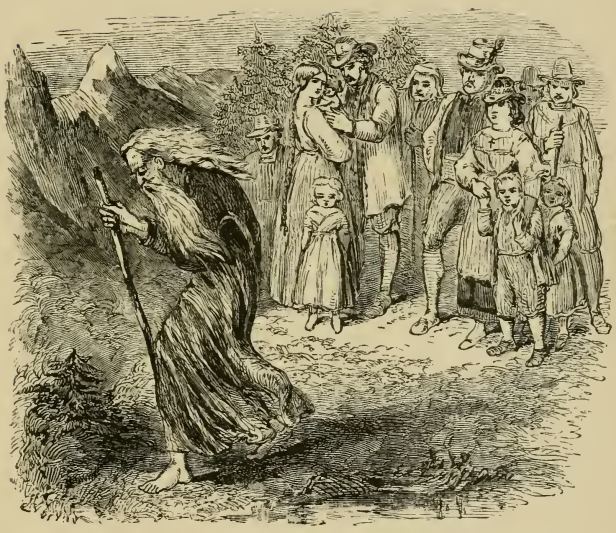
Come list, my dear,
And you shall hear
About the wonderful Wandering Jew.
Who night and day,
The legends say,
Is taking a journey he never gets through.

What is his name,
Or whence he came,
Or whither the weary wanderer goes;
Or why he should stray
In this singular way,
Many have marvelled, but nobody knows.

Though oft, indeed,
(As you may read
In ancient histories quaint and true,)
A man is seen
Of haggard mien
Whom people call the Wandering Jew.

Once in Brabant,
With garments scant,
And shoeless feet, a stranger appeared;
His step was slow,
And white as snow
Were his waving locks and flowing beard.

His cheek was spare,
His head was bare;
And little he recked of heat or cold;
Misfortune's trace
Was in his face,
And he seemed at least a century old.



"Now, goodman, bide,"
The people cried,
"The night with us,—it were surely best;
The wind is cold,
And thou art old,
And sorely needest shelter and rest!"

"Thanks! thanks!" said he,
"It may not be
That I should tarry the night with you;
I cannot stay;
I must away,
For I, alas! am the Wandering Jew!"

"We oft have read,"
The people said,
"Thou bearest ever a nameless woe;
Now, prithee tell
How it befell
That thou art always wandering so?"

"The time would fail
To tell my tale,
And yet a little, ere I depart,
Would I relate
About my fate,
For some, perhaps, may lay it to heart.

"When but a youth
(And such, in sooth,
Are ever of giddy and wanton mood),
With tearless eye
I saw pass by
The Saviour bearing the hateful rood.

"And when he stooped,
And, groaning, drooped
And staggered and fell beneath the weight,
I cursed his name,
And cried, 'For shame!
Move on, blasphemer, and meet thy fate!'

"He raised his head,
And, smiling, said:
'Move on thyself! In sorrow and pain,
When I am gone
Shalt thou move on,
Nor rest thy foot till I come again!'

"Alas! the time
That saw my crime,—
'T was more than a thousand years ago!
And since that hour
Some inward power
Has kept me wandering to and fro.

"I fain would die
That I might lie
With those who sleep in the silent tomb;
But not for me
Is rest,—till He
Shall come to end my dreadful doom.

"The pestilence
That hurries hence
A thousand souls in a single night
Brings me no death
Upon its breath,
But passes by in its wayward flight.

"The storm that wrecks
A hundred decks,
And drowns the shuddering, shrieking crew

Still leaves afloat
The fragile boat
That bears the life of the Wandering Jew.

"But I must away;
I cannot stay;
Nor further suffer a moment's loss;
Heed well the word
That ye have heard, —
Nor spurn the Saviour who bore the Cross!"

THE THREE GOOD DAYS.

A LEGEND OF ITALY.

In Casena dwelt a widow;
Worldly fortune she had none;
Nor a single near relation
Save her silly, idle son.

Little heeded he her counsel
When she bade him stir about, —
Ever yawning, dozing, sleeping,
Like a good-for-nothing lout.

Oft and oft his mother told him
(Dame Lucetta was her name),
'Rise, Lucello! (so she called him),
Get thee out, — for very shame!

"See, the sun is high in heaven!
Quit, my boy, your lazy bed;
Go and seek some honest labor;
So good days shall crown your head."

Much the foolish fellow marvelled
What "good days" might chance to be;
When, at last, the lad determined
He would even go and see.

So, next morning, lo! the sluggard,
Rising lazily and late,
Sauntered forth, and on, and onward,
Till he reached the city gate.

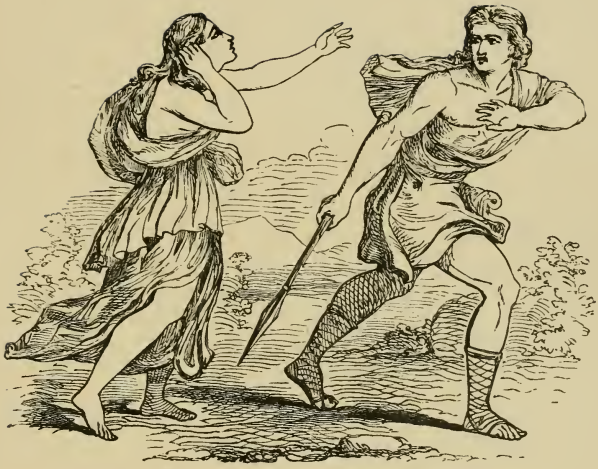
Here Lucello, tired with walking
In the sultry summer heat,
Straightway laid him down to slumber
Right across the trodden street!

Now it chanced three wicked robbers,
Coming from the secret place
Where their stolen wealth was buried,
Met the stranger face to face.

And the first, as he was passing,
Seeing some one in the way
(For he stumbled on the sleeper),
Bade him civilly, "Good day!"

"There is *one!*" Lucello answered,
Minding what the dame had said,
How "good days," for good behavior,
Were to crown his lucky head.

But the robber, conscience-smitten
Touching the unlawful-pelf,
Deemed the words the lad had spoken
Plainly pointed to himself!



Soon another robber, passing,
His "Good day" was fain to give;
"Here is luck!" exclaimed Lucello,
"That's the *second*, as I live!"

Trembling, now the rogues awaited
The arrival of the third,
When again "Good day" was given,
Which with joy Lucello heard.

"Number *three*, by all that's lucky!"
Cried the boy, with keen delight;
"My good days are quickly coming;
Faith! the dame was in the right!"

Whereupon the robbers, guessing
That the lad was well aware
Of the treasure they had hidden,
Straightway offered him a share;

Which he joyfully accepted,
And in triumph carried home,
And with rapture told his mother,
How his lucky days had come!

THE STORY OF ECHO.

A BEAUTIFUL maiden was *Echo*,
As classical history tells,
A favorite nymph of *Diana*,
Who dwelt among forests and dells.

Now *Echo* was very loquacious,
And though she was silly and young,
It seems that she never was weary
Of plying her voluble tongue.

And, I 'm sorry to say in addition,
Besides her impertinent clack,
She had, upon every occasion,
A habit of answering back.

Though even the wisest of matrons
In grave conversation was heard,
Miss *Echo* forever insisted
On having the ultimate word, —

A fault so exceedingly hateful,
That *Juno* (whom *Echo* betrayed
While the goddess was hearing the babble)
Determined to punish the maid.

Said she: "In reward of your folly,
Henceforward in vain you will try
To talk in the manner of others;
At best, you can only *reply!*"

A terrible punishment truly
For one of so lively a turn,
And it brought the poor maiden to ruin;
The way you shall presently learn.

For, meeting the handsome *Narcissus*,
And wishing his favor to gain,
Full often she tried to address him,
But always endeavored in vain.

And when, as it finally happened,
He spoke to the damsel one day,
Her answers seemed only to mock him,
And drove him in anger away.

Ah! sad was the fate of poor *Echo*, —
Was ever so hapless a maid?
She wasted away in her sorrow
Until she was wholly decayed.

But her voice is still living immortal, —
The same you have frequently heard,
In your rambles in valleys and forests,
Repeating your ultimate word!

A CASE OF CONSCIENCE.

Two College Professors, — I won't give their names
(Call one of them *Jacob*, the other one *James*), —
Two College Professors, who ne'er in their lives
Had wandered before from the care of their wives,
One day in vacation, when lectures were through,
And teachers and students had nothing to do,
Took it into their noddles to go to the Races,
To look at the nags, and examine their paces,
And find out the meaning of "bolting" and "baiting,"
And the (clearly preposterous) practice of "waiting,"
And "laying long odds," and the other queer capers
Which cram the reports that appear in the papers;
And whether a "stake" is the same as a post?
And how far a "heat" may resemble a roast?
And whether a "hedge," in the language of sport,
Is much like the plain agricultural sort?
And if "making a book" is a thing which requires
A practical printer? and who are the buyers? —
Such matters as these, — very proper to know, —
And no thought of betting, induced them to go
To the Annual Races, which then were in force
(Horse-racing, in fact, is a matter of *course*,
Apart from the pun) in a neighboring town;
And so, as I said, the Professors went down.
The day was the finest that ever was known;
The atmosphere just of that temperate tone
Which pleases the Spirit of (man and) the Times,
But impossible, quite, to describe in my rhymes.
The track had been put in a capital plight
By a smart dash of rain on the previous night,
And all things "went off" — save some of the horses —
As lively as crickets or Kansas divorces!

Arrived at the ground, it is easy to guess
Our worthy Professors' dismay and distress
At all the queer things which expanded their eyes
(Not to mention their ears) to a wonderful size!
How they stared at the men who were playing at poker,
And scolded the chap with the "sly little joker";
And the boy who had "something uncommonly nice,"

Which he offered to sell at a very high price, —
A volume that did n't seem over-refined,
And clearly was *not* of the Sunday-school kind.
All this, and much more, — but your patience will fail,
Unless I desist, and go on with my tale.

Our worthy Professors no sooner had found
Their (ten-shilling) seats in the circular ground,
And looked at the horses, — when, presently, came
A wish to know what was the *Favorite's* name;
And how stood the *betting*, — quite plainly revealing
The old irrepressible horse-race-y feeling
Which is born in the bone, and is apt to come out
When thorough-bred coursers are snorting about.

The Professors, in fact, — I am grieved to report, —
At the very first match entered into the sport,
And bet (with each other) their money away —
Just *Fifty* apiece — on the *Brown* and the *Bay;*
And shouted as loud as they ever could bellow,
"Hurrah for the filly!" and "Go it, old fellow!"
And, "Stick to your business!" and "Rattle your pegs!"—
Like a jolly old brace of professional "Legs!"

The race being over, quoth *Jacob*, "I see
My wager is forfeit; to *that* I agree
The *Fifty* is yours, by the technical rules
Observed, I am told, by these horse-racing fools;
But then, as a *Christian*, — I 'm sorry to say it, —
My Conscience, you know, won't allow me to pay it!"

"No matter," quoth *James*, "I can hardly refuse
To accord with your sound theological views:
A tardy repentance is better than none;
I must tell you, however, 't was *your* horse that won!
But of course you won't think of demanding the pelf,
For *I* have a conscience as well as yourself!"

THE ORIGIN OF WINE.

A GERMAN LEGEND.

RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED TO O. M. TINKHAM, ESQ.

I.

YE friends of good cheer, I pray you give ear;
I sing of old Noah who planted the vine;
But first, if you please, our thirst to appease,
Let 's drink to his health in a bumper of wine!

II.

When the Deluge was o'er, and good Father Noah
Sat moping one day in the shade of a tree,

An Angel came near, and thinking it queer,
Said: "Tell me, I pray, what the matter may be."

III.

Says Noah: "I 'm curst with a horrible thirst;
So painful, indeed, I am ready to sink;
I have plenty to eat, there 's no lack of meat;
But, sir, on my honor, I 've nothing to drink!"

IV.

"See, on every side," the Angel replied,
"There is water enough both in river and rill,
Your fever to slake, — not to mention the lake,
And many a fountain that flows from the hill."

V.

Says Noah: "I know the waters still flow,
But the Deluge has ruined the fluid for drink;
So many bad men were soaked in it then,
The water now tastes of the sinners, I think."

VI.

"It can't be denied," the Angel replied,
"There is something of reason in what you have said;
Since the water is bad, it is fitting you had
A good wholesome tipple to drink in its stead."

VII.

Then flying away, the very next day
The Angel came back with a handful of seeds;
And taught the good man the properest plan
Of planting, and hoeing, and killing the weeds.

VIII.

Ah! what color and shape! 't is the beautiful grape;
In clusters of purple they hang from the vine;
And these being pressed, it is easily guessed
Old Noah thenceforward drank nothing but wine.

IX.

So, a cup ere we part to the man of our heart,
Old Noah, the primitive grower of wine;
And one brimming cup (nay, fill it quite up)
To the Angel who gave him the seed of the vine!

THE PARROT OF NEVERS.

I.

Once on a time there flourished in Nevers,
Within a nunnery of godly note,
A famous parrot, so exceeding fair
In the deep lustre of his emerald coat,
They called him Ver-Vert, — syllables that mean
In English much the same as Double Green.

II.

In youth transplanted from an Indian strand,
For his soul's health with Christian folks to dwell,
His morals yet were pure, his manners bland;
Gay, handsome, brilliant, and, the truth to tell,
Pert and loquacious, as became his age;
In short, well worthy of his holy cage.

III.

Dear to the sisters for his winning ways
Was gay Ver-Vert; they kept him ever near,
And kindly taught him many a holy phrase,
Enforced with titbits from their daily cheer,
And loved him better, they would oft declare,
Than any one, except their darling *Mère!*

IV.

Ah! ne'er was parrot happier than he;
And happy was the lucky girl of whom
He asked — according as his whim might be —
The privilege at eve to share her room,
Where, perched upon the relics, he would sleep
Through the long night in slumber calm and deep.

V.

At length, what joy to see! — the bird had grown,
With good example, thoughtful and devout,
He said his prayers in such a nasal tone,
His piety was quite beyond a doubt;
And some declared that soon, with proper teaching,
He 'd rival the Superior at preaching!

VI.

If any laughed to see his solemn ways,
In curt rebuke, "*Orate!*" * he replied;
And when his zeal provoked a shower of praise,
"*Deo sit laus!*" † the humble novice cried;
And many said they did n't mind confessing
His "*Pax sit tecum!*" ‡ brought a special blessing.

VII.

Such wondrous talents, though awhile concealed,
Could not be kept in secresy forever;
Some babbling nun the precious truth revealed,
And all the town must see a bird so clever;
Until at last so wide the wonder grew,
'T was fairly bruited all the country through.

VIII.

And so it fell, by most unlucky chance,
A distant city of the parrot heard;

* Pray!
† Praise be to God.
‡ Peace be with you.

The story reached some sister-nuns at Nantz,
Who fain themselves would see this precious bird
Whose zeal and learning had sufficed to draw
On blest Nevers such honor and *éclat.*

IX.

What could they do? — well, here is what they did,
To the good Abbess presently there went
A friendly note, in which the writers bid
A thousand blessings hasten their descent
Upon her honored house, — and would she please
To grant a favor asked upon their knees?

X.

'T was only this, that she would deign to lend
For a brief space that charming parroquet;
They hoped the bold request might not offend
Her ladyship, but then they fain would get
Such proof as only he could well advance
To silence certain sceptic nuns of Nantz.

XI.

The letter came to hand, and such a storm
Of pious wrath was never heard before;
The mildest sister waxed exceeding warm, —
"*Perdre Ver-Vert! O ciel! plutôt la mort!*"
They all broke forth in one terrific cry,
What? — lose their darling? — they would rather die!

XII.

But, on reflection, it was reckoned best
To take the matter into grave debate,
And put the question fairly to the test
(Which seemed, indeed, a nice affair of state),
If they should lend their precious pet or not;
And so they held a session, long and hot.

XIII.

The sisters all with one accord express
Their disapproval in a noisy "No!"
The graver dame — who loved the parrot less —
Declared, Perhaps 't were best to let him go;
Refusal was ungracious, and, indeed,
An ugly quarrel might suffice to breed.

XIV.

Vain was the clamor of the younger set;
"Just fifteen days and not a moment more"
(Mamma decided) "we will lend our pet;
Of course his absence we shall all deplore,

But then, remember, he is only lent
For two short weeks," — and off the parrot went!

XV.

In the same bark that bore the bird away
Were several Gascons and a vulgar nurse,
Besides two Cyprian ladies; sooth to say,
Ver-Vert's companions could n't have been worse.
Small profit such a youth might hope to gain
From wretches so licentious and profane.

XVI.

Their manners struck him as extremely queer;
Such oaths and curses he had never heard
As now in volleys stunned his saintly ear;
Although he did n't understand a word,
Their conversation seemed improper, very,
To one brought up within a monastery.

XVII.

For his, remember, was a Christian tongue
Unskilled in aught save pious prose or verse
By his good sisters daily said or sung;
And now to hear the Gascons and the nurse
Go on in such a roaring, ribald way,
He knew not what to think, nor what to say.

XVIII.

And so he mused in silence; till at last
The nurse reproached him for a sullen fool,
And poured upon him a terrific blast
Of questions, such as, where he 'd been to school?
And was he used to travelling about?
And did his mother know that he was out?

XIX.

"*Ave Maria!*" * said the parrot, — vexed
By so much banter into sudden speech, —
Whereat all laughed to hear the holy text,
And cried, "By Jove! the chap is going to preach!"
"Come," they exclaimed, "let 's have a song instead."
"*Cantate Domino!*" † the parrot said.

XX.

At this reply they laughed so loud and long
That poor Ver-Vert was fairly stricken dumb.
In vain they teased him for a merry song;
Abashed by ridicule and quite o'ercome
With virulent abuse, the wretched bird
For two whole days refused to speak a word.

* Hail Mary.
† Let us sing unto the Lord.

XXI.

Meanwhile he listened to their vile discourse
In deep disgust; but still the stranger thought
Their slang surpassed in freedom, pith, and force
The purer language which the missal taught,
And seemed, besides, an easier tongue to speak
Than prayer-book Latin or monastic Greek.

XXII.

In short, to tell the melancholy truth,
Before the boat had reached its destined shore
He who embarked a pure, ingenuous youth,
Had grown a profligate, and cursed and swore
Such dreadful oaths as e'en the Gascons heard
With shame, and said, "The Devil's in the bird!"

XXIII.

At length the vessel has arrived in port
And half the sisterhood are waiting there
To greet their guest, and safely to escort
To their own house the wonderful Ver-Vert, —
The precious parrot whom their fancies paint
Crowned with a halo like a very saint!

XXIV.

Great was the clamor when their eyes beheld
The charming stranger in the emerald coat;
"Ver-Vert, indeed!" — his very hue compelled
A shout of praise that reached the highest note.
"And then such eyes! and such a graceful walk!
And soon — what rapture! — we shall hear him talk!"

XXV.

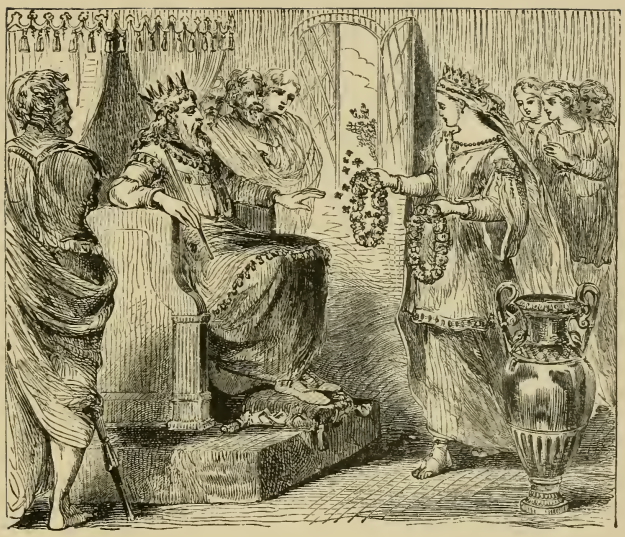
At length the Abbess, in a nasal chant
(Intended, doubtless, for a pretty speech),
Showered him with thanks that he had deigned to grant
His worthy presence there, and to beseech
His benediction in such gracious terms
As might befit the sinfulest of worms.

XXVI.

Alas for youthful piety! the bird,
Still thinking o'er the lessons latest learned,
For a full minute answered not a word,
And then, as if to show how much he spurned
The early teachings of his holy school,
He merely muttered, "Curse the silly fool!"

XXVII.

The lady, startled at the queer remark,
Could not but think that she had heard amiss;
And so began to speak again, — but hark!
What diabolic dialect is this? —



Such language for a saint was most improper,
Each word an oath, and every oath a whopper!

XXVIII.

"*Parbleu!*" "*Morbleu!*" and every azure curse
To pious people strictly disallowed,
Including others that were vastly worse,
Came rattling forth on the astonished crowd
In such a storm that one might well compare
The dreadful volley to a *feu d'enfer!*

XXIX.

All stood aghast in horror and dismay;
Some cried, "For shame! is that the way they teach
Their pupils at Nevers?" Some ran away,
Rending the welkin with a piercing screech;
Some stopt their ears for modesty; and some
(Though shocked) stood waiting something worse to come.

XXX.

In brief, the dame, replete with holy rage
At being thus insulted and disgraced,
Shut up the hateful parrot in his cage,
And sent him back with all convenient haste
And this indignant note: "In time to come
Be pleased to keep your precious prize at home!"

XXXI.

When to Nevers the wicked wanderer came,
All were delighted at his quick return;
But who can paint their sorrow and their shame
When the sad truth the gentle sisters learn,
That he who left them chanting pious verses,
Now greets his friends with horrid oaths and curses!

XXXII.

'T is said that after many bitter days
In wholesome solitude and penance passed,
Ver-Vert grew meek, reformed his wicked ways,
And died a hopeful penitent at last.
The moral of my story is n't deep, —
"Young folks, beware what company you keep!"

KING SOLOMON AND THE BEES.

A TALE OF THE TALMUD.

I.

When Solomon was reigning in his glory,
Unto his throne the Queen of Sheba came,

(So in the Talmud you may read the story)
Drawn by the magic of the monarch's fame,
To see the splendors of his court, and bring
Some fitting tribute to the mighty king.

II.

Nor this alone; much had her Highness heard
What flowers of learning graced the royal speech;
What gems of wisdom dropped with every word;
What wholesome lessons he was wont to teach
In pleasing proverbs; and she wished, in sooth,
To know if Rumor spoke the simple truth.

III.

Besides, the queen had heard (which piqued her most)
How through the deepest riddles he could spy;
How all the curious arts that women boast
Were quite transparent to his piercing eye;
And so the queen had come—a royal guest—
To put the sage's cunning to the test.

IV.

And straight she held before the monarch's view,
In either hand, a radiant wreath of flowers;
The one, bedecked with every charming hue,
Was newly culled from Nature's choicest bowers;
The other, no less fair in every part,
Was the rare product of divinest Art.

V.

"Which is the true, and which the false?" she said.
Great Solomon was silent. All-amazed,
Each wondering courtier shook his puzzled head,
While at the garlands long the monarch gazed,
As one who sees a miracle, and fain,
For very rapture, ne'er would speak again.

VI.

"Which is the true?" once more the woman asked,
Pleased at the fond amazement of the king,
"So wise a head should not be hardly tasked,
Most learnéd liege, with such a trivial thing!"
But still the sage was silent; it was plain
A deepening doubt perplexed the royal brain.

VII.

While thus he pondered, presently he sees,
Hard by the casement, —so the story goes, —
A little band of busy, bustling bees,
Hunting for honey in a withered rose.

The monarch smiled, and raised his royal head;
"Open the window!" — that was all he said.

VIII.

The window opened at the king's command;
Within the room the eager insects flew,
And sought the flowers in Sheba's dexter hand!
And so the king and all the courtiers knew
That wreath was Nature's; and the baffled queen
Returned to tell the wonders she had seen.

IX.

My story teaches (every tale should bear
A fitting moral) that the wise may find
In trifles light as atoms in the air,
Some useful lesson to enrich the mind,
Some truth designed to profit or to please, —
As Israel's king learned wisdom from the bees!

THE PIOUS BRAHMIN AND HIS NEIGHBORS.

A HINDOO FABLE.

A pious Brahmin made a vow
Upon a certain day
To sacrifice a fatted sheep;
And so, his vow to pay,
One morning to the market-place
The Brahmin took his way.

It chanced three cunning neighbors,
Three rogues of brazen brow,
Had formed the wicked purpose
(My tale will tell you how),
To cheat the pious Brahmin,
And profit by his vow.

The leader of these cunning knaves
Went forth upon the road,
And bearing on his shoulders
What seemed a heavy load,
He met the pious Brahmin
Not far from his abode.

"What have you there?" the Brahmin said.
"Indeed," the man replies,
"I have the finest, fattest sheep,
And of the largest size;
A sheep well worthy to be slain
In solemn sacrifice!"

And then the rogue laid down his load,
And from a bag drew forth
A scurvy dog. "See there!" he cried,
"The finest sheep on earth!
And you shall have him, if you will,
For less than he is worth."

"Wretch!" cried the pious Brahmin,
"To call a beast so mean
A goodly sheep! 'T is but a dog
Accurséd and unclean;
The foulest, leanest, lamest cur
That ever yet was seen!"

Just then the second rogue came up.
"What luck!" he said, "to find
So soon a sheep in flesh and fleece
Exactly to my mind!"

"A sheep?" exclaimed the Brahmin,
"Then I am surely blind!"

"You must be very blind indeed,
Or fond of telling lies,
To say the beast is *not* a sheep!"
The cunning rogue replies;
"Go get a leech to mend your tongue,
Or else to mend your eyes!"

Now while these men disputed thus,
The other rogue drew near,
And all agreed this honest man
Should make the matter clear.
"O stranger!" cried the Brahmin,
"What creature have we here?"

"A goodly sheep!" the stranger said.
"Alas!" the Brahmin cried,
"A moment since I would have sworn
This honest fellow lied;
But now I know it is a sheep,
Since thus you all decide!"

And so it was the cunning knaves
Prevailed in their device;
The pious Brahmin bought the dog,
Nor higgled at the price.
"'T will make," he said, "unto the gods
A pleasing sacrifice!"

But ill betide the fatal hour
His filthy blood was shed;
It brought no benison, alas!
Upon the Brahmin's head;
The gods were angry at the deed,
And sent a curse instead!

The meaning of this pleasant tale
Is very plainly shown;
The man is sure to fall, at last,
Who does n't stand alone;
Don't trust to other people's eyes,
But learn to mind your own!

THE ROMANCE OF NICK VAN STANN.[8]

I CANNOT vouch my tale is true,
Nor swear, indeed, 't is wholly new;
But, true or false, or new or old,
I think you 'll find it fairly told.
A Frenchman, who had ne'er before
Set foot upon a foreign shore,
Weary of home, resolved to go
And see what Holland had to show.
He did n't know a word of Dutch,
But that could hardly grieve him much;
He thought, — as Frenchmen always do, —
That all the world could *parley-voo!*
At length our eager tourist stands
Within the famous Netherlands,
And, strolling gayly here and there
In search of something rich or rare,
A lordly mansion greets his eyes.
"How beautiful!" the Frenchman cries,
And, bowing to the man who sate
In livery at the garden-gate;
"Pray, Mr. Porter, if you please,
Whose very charming grounds are these?
And — pardon me — be pleased to tell
Who in this splendid house may dwell?"
To which, in Dutch, the puzzled man

Replied what seemed like "*Nick Van Stann.*" *
"Thanks!" said the Gaul, "the owner's taste
Is equally superb and chaste;
So fine a house, upon my word,
Not even Paris can afford.
With statues, too, in every niche,
Of course, *Monsieur Van Stann* is rich,
And lives, I warrant, like a king, —
Ah! wealth must be a charming thing!"

In Amsterdam the Frenchman meets
A thousand wonders in the streets;
But most he marvels to behold
A lady dressed in silk and gold.
Gazing with rapture at the dame,
He begs to know the lady's name,
And hears — to raise his wonder more —
The very words he heard before.
"*Mercie!*" he cries, "well, on my life,
Milord has got a charming wife;
'T is plain to see, this *Nick Van Stann*
Must be a very happy man!"

Next day, our tourist chanced to pop
His head within a lottery-shop,
And there he saw, with staring eyes,
The drawing of the Mammoth Prize.
"Ten Millions! 'T is a pretty sum;
I wish I had as much at home!
I 'd like to know, as I 'm a sinner,
What lucky fellow is the winner."
Conceive our traveller's amaze
To hear again the hackneyed phrase!

"What! No? not *Nick Van Stann* again?
Faith! he 's the luckiest of men!
You may be sure we don't advance
So rapidly as that in France.
A house, the finest in the land;
A lovely garden, nicely planned;
A perfect angel of a wife,
And gold enough to last a life, —
There never yet was mortal man
So blest as *Monsieur Nick Van Stann!*

Next day the Frenchman chanced to meet
A pompous funeral in the street,
And asking one who stood near by
What nobleman had pleased to die?
Was stunned to hear the old reply.
The Frenchman sighed and shook his head.
"*Mon Dieu!* poor *Nick Van Stann* is dead!
With such a house, and such a wife,
It must be hard to part with life;
And then, to lose that Mammoth Prize —
He wins, and — pop! — the winner dies!
Ah! well, his blessings came so fast
I greatly feared they could n't last;
And thus, we see, the sword of Fate
Cuts down alike the small and great!"

THE FISHERMAN AND THE FLOUNDER.

A GERMAN FAIRY TALE.

A FISHERMAN, poor as poor can be,
Who lived in a hovel beside the sea,

* *Ik kan niet verstaan,* — I don't understand.

Was fishing one day, when "Lo!" he cries,
"I 've caught a flounder of wondrous size,
As fine a flounder as one could wish!"
"O no, you have n't!" exclaimed the fish;
"In spite of my scaly skin," he said,
"I am not a fish, but a Prince instead;
Condemned to suffer this watery woe;
So I beg, good man, you will let me go!"
The fisherman, frightened at what he heard,
Let the flounder go with never a word
Except "Good by! I 'd rather eschew
Than cook a flounder who talks like you!"
His hovel now the fisherman sought,
And told his wife of the fish he caught,
And how his luck was all in vain,
For he let the flounder off again!
"And did you ask for nothing?—alack!"
The woman cried: "Go presently back,
And tell the Prince of our wretched lot,
And ask him to give us a finer cot!"
To mind his wife he was something loth,
But he feared the woman when she was wroth;
And so he went to the ocean-side,
And thus the fisherman loudly cried:
"O good flounder in the sea,
Hither quickly come to me;
For Pauline, my loving dame,
Wants queer things I fear to name."
Whereat the flounder, swimming near,
Said, "Why, O why, am I summoned here?"
And the trembling fisherman answered thus:
"My dame is always making a fuss;
A cosey hovel is hers and mine,
But she fain would have a cottage fine!"
"Go home," said the fish, "this very minute;
The cottage is hers; you 'll find her in it!"
He hied him home in haste, and lo!
The fisherman found it even so.
"How happy," he cried, "we now shall be!"
But the woman answered, "We shall see!"
When a month was past, the woman sighed
For a larger house. "Now go," she cried,
"And tell the flounder ('t is my command)
I want a mansion large and grand!"
To mind the dame he was truly loth,
But he feared the woman when she was wroth;
So he went again to the ocean-side,
And loudly thus the fisherman cried:
"O good flounder in the sea,
Hither quickly come to me;
For Pauline, my loving dame,
Wants queer things I fear to name."
Whereat the flounder, swimming near,
Said, "Why again am I summoned here?"

And the trembling fisherman answered thus:
"My wife is always making a fuss;
She deems our cottage much too small;
She wants a mansion large and tall."
"Go home," said the fish, "this very minute;
The mansion is there; you 'll find her in it!"
He hied him home in haste, and lo!
The fisherman found it even so.
And he cried, "How happy we shall be!"
But the woman answered, "We shall see!"
When a week was past, the woman sighed
For a castle grand. "Now go," she cried,
"And tell the flounder that he must give
Your wife a palace wherein to live."
To mind the dame he was greatly loth,
But he feared the woman when she was wroth;
So he went again to the ocean-side,
And softly thus the fisherman cried:
"O good flounder in the sea,
Hither quickly come to me;
For Pauline, my loving dame,
Wants queer things I fear to name!"
Whereat the flounder, swimming near,
Said, "Why again am I summoned here?"
And the trembling fisherman answered thus:
"My dame is always making a fuss;
She deems our mansion poorly planned;
She wants a palace great and grand!"
"Go home," said the fish, "this very minute;
The palace is there; you 'll find her in it!"
He hied him home in haste, and, lo!
The fisherman found it even so,
And he cried, "How happy we shall be!"
But the woman answered, "We shall see!"
When a day was past, with growing pride,
For regal power the woman sighed;
And she bade the fisherman tell the fish
To reign as a king was now her wish.
To mind the dame he was sadly loth,
But he feared the woman when she was wroth;
So he went again to the ocean-side,
And softly thus the fisherman cried:
"O good flounder in the sea,
Hither quickly come to me;
For Pauline, my loving dame,
Wants queer things I fear to name."
Whereat the flounder, swimming near,
Said, "Why again am I summoned here?"
And the trembling fisherman answered thus:
"My dame is always making a fuss;
She has got a palace great and grand,
And now she asks for royal command!"
"Go home!" said the fish, "at the palace gate
You 'll find her a king in royal state!"

He hied him home in haste, and, lo!
The fisherman found it even so.
"Good faith," said he, "'t is a charming thing
To be, like you, a sovereign king.
With a golden crown upon your brow.
I'm sure you'll be contented now!"
"Not I, indeed," the woman said,
"A triple crown would grace my head;
And I am worthy, I humbly hope.
Go tell the flounder to make me pope!"
"A pope? my dear, it cannot be done!
The Church, you know, allows but one."
"Nay, none of your nonsense, man," said she,
"A pope, a pope I am bound to be!
The Prince will find it an easy thing
To make a pope as to make a king!"
To mind the dame he was sorely loth,
But he feared the woman when she was wroth;
So he went again to the ocean-side,
And thus the fisherman faintly cried:
"O good flounder in the sea,
Hither quickly come to me,
For Pauline, my loving dame,
Wants queer things I fear to name!"
Whereat the flounder, swimming near,
Said, "Why again am I summoned here?"
"Alack, alack!" the fisherman said,
"Whatever has turned the woman's head,
She is ill-content with royal scope,
And now, good lack! she would fain be pope!"
"Go home!" the flounder gruffly cried,
"And see the end of foolish pride;
You'll find her in her hovel again,
And there, till death, shall she remain!"

HOW THE RAVEN BECAME BLACK.

THERE 's a clever classic story,
Such as poets used to write,
(You may find the tale in Ovid,)
That the Raven once was white.

White as yonder swan a-sailing
At this moment in the moat,
Till the bird, for misbehavior,
Lost, one day, his snowy coat.

"Raven-white" was once the saying,
Till an accident, alack!
Spoiled its meaning, and thereafter
It was changed to "Raven-black."

Shall I tell you how it happened
That the change was brought about?
List the story of Coronis,
And you 'll find the secret out.

Young Coronis, fairest maiden
Of Thessalia's girlish train,
Whom Apollo loved and courted,
Loved and courted not in vain,

Flirted with another lover
(So at least the story goes)
And was wont to meet him slyly,
Underneath the blushing rose.

Whereupon the bird of Phœbus,
Who their meetings chanced to view,
Went in haste unto his master,
Went and told him all he knew;

Told him how his dear Coronis,
False and faithless as could be,
Plainly loved another fellow, —
If he doubted, come and see!

Whereupon Apollo, angry
Thus to find himself betrayed,
With his silver bow-and-arrow
Went and shot the wretched maid!

Now when he perceived her dying,
He was stricken to the heart,
And to stop her mortal bleeding,
Tried his famous healing art.

But in vain; the god of Physic
Had no antidote; alack!
He who took her off so deftly
Could n't bring the maiden back.

Angry with himself, Apollo,
Yet more angry with his bird,
For a moment stood in silence,
Impotent to speak a word.

Then he turned upon the Raven,
Wanton babbler! see thy fate!
Messenger of mine no longer,
Go to Hades with thy prate!

"Weary Pluto with thy tattle!
Hither, monster, come not back;
And, to match thy disposition,
Henceforth be thy plumage black!"

MORAL.

When you 're tempted to make mischief,
It is wisest to refuse;
People are not apt to fancy
Bearers of unwelcome news.

SECOND MORAL.

Something of the pitch you handle
On your fingers will remain;
As the Raven's tale of darkness
Gave the bird a lasting stain.

DEATH AND CUPID.

AN ALLEGORY.

Ah! who but oft hath marvelled why
The gods who rule above
Should e'er permit the young to die,
The old to fall in love!

Ah! why should hapless humankind
Be punished out of season?
Pray listen, and perhaps you 'll find
My rhyme may give the reason.

Death, strolling out one summer's day,
Met Cupid, with his sparrows;
And, bantering in a merry way,
Proposed a change of arrows.

"Agreed!" quoth Cupid, "I foresee
The queerest game of errors;

For you the King of Hearts will be,
And I 'll be King of Terrors."

And so 't was done. Alas the day
That multiplied their arts!
Each from the other bore away
A portion of his darts,

And that explains the reason why,
Despite the gods above,
The young are often doomed to die,
The old to fall in love!

LOVE AND LUCRE.

AN ALLEGORY.

Love and Lucre met one day,
In chill November weather,
And so, to while the time away,
They held discourse together.

Love at first was rather shy,
As thinking there was danger
In venturing so very nigh
The haughty-looking stranger.

But Lucre managed to employ
Behavior so potential,
That, in a trice, the bashful boy
Grew bold and confidential.

"I hear," quoth Lucre, bowing low,
"With all your hearts and honey,
You sometimes suffer — is it so? —
For lack of ready money."

Love owned that he was poor in aught
Except in golden fancies,
And ne'er as yet had given a thought
To mending his finances;

"Besides, I 've heard" — so Love went on,
The other's hint improving —
"That gold, however sought or won,
Is not a friend to loving."

"An arrant lie! — as you shall see, —
Full long ago invented
By knaves who know not you nor me,
To tickle the demented."

And Lucre waved his wand, and lo!
By magical expansion,
Love saw his little hovel grow
Into a stately mansion;

And where, before, he used to sup
Untended in his cottage,
And grumble o'er the earthen cup
That held his meagre pottage, —

Now, smoking viands crown his board,
And many a flowing chalice;
His larder was with plenty stored,
And beauty filled the palace.

And Love, though rather lean at first,
And tinged with melancholy,
On generous wines and puddings nursed,
Grew very stout and jolly.

Yet, mindful of his early friend,
He never turns detractor,

But prays that blessings may attend
His worthy benefactor;

And when his friends are gay above
Their evening whist or euchre,
And drink a brimming health to Love,
He drinks "Success to Lucre!"

WISDOM AND CUNNING.

AN ALLEGORY.

As Wisdom one evening was taking a stroll,
Quite out of her usual road,
She came to a hut, at the foot of a knoll,
Where Selfishness had his abode.

In this dismal retreat, which, within and without,
Was the shabbiest ever was known,
In a fashion befitting so scurvy a lout,
The miser was living alone.

She knocked at the door with a maidenly rap,
To inquire concerning the way;
For in strolling about, by an awkward mishap,
Miss Wisdom had wandered astray.

The occupant growled, for the insolent churl
Suspected some beggarly kin:
But, getting a peep at the beautiful girl,
He civilly bade her, "Come in!"

Alas for the damsel! was ever before
A maid in so wretched a plight?
For Selfishness cruelly bolted the door,
And forced her to wed him outright.

That a couple so mated soon came to be foes,
Of course it is easy to see;
For natures so opposite, every one knows,
Could never a moment agree.

And so it befell that the lady at last,
By pleading deception and force,
From the infamous marriage that bound her so fast,
Procured an eternal divorce.

But ere 't was decreed, it is proper to say,
A serious mischief was done;
For it happened one morning, — bad luck to the day!
The lady gave birth to a son.

An ill-looking urchin as ever was born
(As Cunning the fellow is known),
Whom even his mother regarded with scorn,
And never was willing to own.

A slight look of Wisdom he bears in his face,
Procures him a deal of respect
With people too little discerning to trace
The vices which others detect.

For, ever his motives are sordid and vile,
And ever his methods are mean;
And thus, in despite of his treacherous smile,
The mind of the father is seen.

THE SULTAN AND THE OWLS.

AN ARABIAN TALE.

I.

THE Sultan, Mahmoud, in his early reign,
By bootless foreign wars reduced the nation,
Till half his faithful followers were slain,
And all the land was filled with desolation.

II.

The Sultan's Vizier, saddened at the heart
To see at every turn some new disaster,
Essayed in vain, by counsel and by art,
To stay the folly of his royal master.

III.

The Vizier, deeply versed in legal lore,
In state affairs the Sultan's chief reliance,
Had found, besides, some leisure to explore
In learnéd books the mysteries of science.

IV.

With other matters of the graver sort,
He knew to judge men's fancies by their features;
And understood, according to report,
The hidden language of the feathered creatures.

V.

One pleasant evening, on an aged tree,
The while within a wood the twain were walking,
The Sultan and the Vizier chanced to see
A pair of solemn owls engaged in talking.

VI.

The Sultan asked: "What is it that they say?"
And fain would know what the debate portended;
The Vizier answered: "Sire, excuse me, pray,
I fear your Highness would be much offended."

VII.

"Nay," said the Sultan, "whatsoe'er it be
These heralds of Minerva may be saying,
Repeat it, Vizier, faithfully to me;
There's no offence, except in not obeying."

VIII.

"Well," said the other, "these sagacious fowls
Have met, 't would seem, at the appointed hour,

To fix their children's wedding; and the owls
Are at this moment talking of the dower.

IX.

"The father of the daughter, speaking free,
Says: 'What are your conditions? please to state 'em!'
'Well, twenty ruined villages,' quoth he
(The father of the son); 'and that 's my *ultimatum!*'

X.

"'Done!' says the other, 'only understand
I 'd say two hundred quite as soon as twenty;
Thanks to good Mahmoud! while *he* rules the land
We shall have ruined villages in plenty!'"

XI.

'T is said the Sultan, stricken with remorse,
Restored the land reduced by war and pillage,
And ruled so wisely in his future course
That not an owl could find a ruined village.

THE PIN AND THE NEEDLE.

AN APOLOGUE.

I.

A PIN and Needle in a basket lay,
Exempt from household labors;
And so they fell a-quarrelling one day,
Like other idle neighbors.

II.

"Pray, what 's the use," the saucy Pin exclaimed,
"Of such as you, you noddy?
Before fine ladies you must be ashamed
To show your headless body!"

III.

"Who cares about your brazen little head?
I hold it in derision;
'T is good for naught," the Needle sharply said,
"Without an eye for vision!"

IV.

"Tut!" said the other, piqued at this reply,
"What profit do you find it,
When any thread, unless you mind your eye,
Can in a moment blind it?"

V.

"If," said the Needle, "what you say were true,
I 'll leave it to the Thimble,
If I am not as bright again as you,
And twenty times as nimble."

VI.

"Grant," said the Pin, "you speak the simple truth,
Beyond the slightest cavil,
You 'll die so much the sooner, — in your youth,
Worn out with toil and travel."

VII.

"Fie!" said the Needle, "to my Fate I trust;
I scorn to be a laggard,
And live and die, like you, consumed with rust,
Misshapen, old, and haggard!"

VIII.

Unhappy boaster! for it came to pass
The Needle scarce had spoken,
When she was taken by an awkward lass,
And in the eye was broken!

IX.

Whereat the Pin (which meets the damsel's view)
Around the neck is threaded,
And after many struggles to get through,
Is suddenly beheaded!

X.

"Well, here we are!" the Needle humbly said;
No more a haughty scorner
Of the poor Pin who shared her lowly bed, —
A dust-heap in the corner.

XI.

'Yes," said the other, thinking of the past,
"I wish in better season
We might have learned the lesson which at last
Has brought us both to reason!"

XII.

"Friend," said the Needle, "we are much like men, —
Scornful in sunny weather;
And only mindful they are brothers when
They 're in the dirt together!"

BEN-AMMI AND THE FAIRIES.

A RABBINICAL TALE.

ONCE on a time a stranger came
At midnight to a wealthy man, —
Rabbi Ben-ammi was his name, —
And thus his salutation ran:

"Rabbi! I have a child at home
Who on the morrow's early light
Is eight days old; and thou must come
And celebrate the sacred rite."

Now this Ben-ammi, be it known,
Though few indeed were rich as he,
With growing wealth, alas! had grown
A miser to the last degree.

And yet he held, it should be told,
His office in such pure regard,
With all his sordid lust of gold,
He served the poor without reward.

So at the word Ben-ammi rose,
And when the sacred Law was read,
Forth in the night the Rabbi goes,
To follow where the stranger led.

The night was dark, and, sooth to say,
The road they trod was rough indeed;

Yet on and on they took their way,
Where'er the stranger chose to lead.

At last they reached, towards the dawn,
A rock so huge, within a wood,
A hundred steeds could not have drawn
The mighty stone from where it stood.

Now mark the wonder that occurred:
The stranger touched it with his hand,
Spoke to himself some mystic word,
And straight it moved from off the land!

And now the wondering Rabbi found
The earth was open for a space,
With steps that led beneath the ground,
As if to some mysterious place.

Descending these with prudent care,
And going far and farther down,
They reached an open country, where
They found, at length, a peopled town.

Among the houses, large and small,
There stood a palace vast and grand,
And here, within a spacious hall,
Were fairy-folks on every hand.

Now going where the woman lay
Whose child the sacred rite required,
The stranger bade Ben-ammi stay,
And, bowing, silently retired.

"Rabbi, pray listen!" said the dame;
"These people here whom thou hast seen
Thou knowest not except by name, —
The fairy race of *Mazakeen.*

"They are not human like ourselves
(For I, indeed, was once of earth),
But queer, uncouth, uncanny elves,
Who find in mischief all their mirth.

"And yet they have religions too;
All kinds of creeds, like folks above;
And he who rules them is a Jew, —
My husband whom I dearly love.

"And hence it was he made so bold
To bring thee hither in the night,
That for our babe, now eight days old,
Thou mayst perform the holy rite.

"*He* stole me from the earth away;
Of this I do not now complain:
But listen well to what I say,
If thou wouldst e'er return again.

"Beware! taste neither food nor drink
Whilst thou art here, on any plea,
Or in a moment thou wilt sink
Thy manly form to — what you see!"

The king returning with his *suite*,
The holy rite was duly done,
And all sat down to drink and eat
In merry glee, — save only one.

Ben-ammi (fearing the abuse
The dame had borne) did not partake
Of bread or wine, but made excuse
Of three days' fast for conscience' sake.

Whereat the king was moved to say,
"How then shall I reward thy task?"
"Let me return to earth this day,"
Ben-ammi said; "'t is all I ask."

"Nay!" answered he; and led him forth
'Mid heaps of gems and golden ore.
"I would return this day to earth,"
Ben-ammi said; "I ask no more!"

Entering another room, he sees
(And marvels much, we may suppose)
Along the walls, a thousand keys
In bunches, hung in rusty rows.

While gazing at each brazen line,
Ben-ammi cries, with startled tone:
"This bunch so much resembles mine
That I should take them for my own!"

"Thou sayest well," the king replied;
"They are thine own; 't is here I hold
The keys of men who basely hide,
And do not use, their gathered gold.

"Here, take the keys! Henceforth thy heart
Will melt in pity for the poor;
And all thou givest will impart
A double blessing on thy store.

"Now, wouldst thou go, first shut thine eyes,"
Then waves his hand towards the dome;
Up and away Ben-ammi flies,
And quickly finds himself at home!

And from that day Ben-ammi knew
The use of wealth, and understood
(While more and more his riches grew)
The blessed art of doing good!

THE DISCONTENTED WATER-CARRIER.

A TURKISH TALE.

I.

"THERE goes the Vizier and his gaudy train!
While I, poor Hassan, indigent and old,
Must carry water; well, I can't explain
Why one wears rags, another cloth of gold.

II.

"The single diamond that bedecks his sword
Would set me up a gentleman for life;
And now, God bless me! I cannot afford
A pair of scarlet trousers for my wife!

III.

"With half the money that his servants waste
Each day in knick-knacks, it is very clear
My family might live like kings, and taste
Roast kid for dinner fifty times year.

IV.

"It *may* be just; I don't affirm 't is not;
Allah is Allah! and knows what is best;
But if, for mine, I had the Vizier's lot,
'T would please me vastly better, I protest!"

V.

So murmured Hassan, vext within himself
To see the Vizier riding proudly by;
When suddenly a little fairy elf
Appeared before him with a twinkling eye.

VI.

"Peace!" said the Fairy; "ere thy speech begun
I knew to what thy present thoughts incline;
Choose any gift thou wilt (but only one),
And, by my kingdom, it shall soon be thine!"

VII.

Poor Hassan, filled with joy, at once began:
"I fain would have —" but paused before the word
Escaped his mouth; or, sooth to say, the man
Had named the jewel on the Vizier's sword!

VIII.

What next he thought to choose was all the gold
That filled the Calif's coffers; then he thought
Of Bagdad's riches; then the wealth untold
Of all the earth, — so fast his fancy wrought!

IX.

Such various wishes thronged his teeming brain,
He pondered long, until the Fairy's voice
Showed some impatience, and the man was fain
From very fear to hasten in his choice.

X.

But halting still when at the point to tell
His final wish, the Fairy kindly told
(To aid his choosing) of a hidden well
Filled to the brim with jewels and with gold.

XI.

And then she led him to a secret grot,
Where, underneath a stone, the treasure lies,
Removed the slab that sealed the sacred spot,
And showed the riches to his wondering eyes.

XII

"Take what you will of this exhaustless store;
But, mark you, if you pause to dine or sup,
Your work is finished; you can have no more;
The stone will move and close the coffer up."

XIII.

Charmed with the sight that met his dazzled gaze,
He stood enrapt; then turned to thank the fay
For so much bounty; but, to his amaze,
The nimble sprite unseen had fled away.

XIV.

Whate'er three ample water-skins could hold
Was soon his own; but this contents him not;
Unnumbered coins of silver and of gold
Invite his spade, and chain him to the spot.

XV.

"Another hour of digging will suffice,"
Quoth Hassan, delving with increasing greed.
"Well, by the Prophet, here is something nice!
Rubies and diamonds! this is wealth indeed!"

XVI.

And so he dug (remembering the hint
The Fairy gave him) till his busy spade
Had piled a mound so vast, the Calif's mint
Could scarce have matched the glittering heap he made.

XVII.

And yet he toils, as greedy as before.
"A little more!" said Hassan. "ere the sun
Sinks in the west, — some fifty shovels more,
And this day's work, a brave one! will be done!"

XVIII.

Poor Hassan! heedless of the fading day,
He wrought at night as he had wrought at noon;
Weary and faint, but impotent to stay
His eager hand beneath the rising moon.

XIX.

"A little more!" the miser said, "and I
Will make an end." He raised his weary hand
To delve again; then dropt it with a sigh, —
So weak and worn that he could hardly stand.

XX.

Fatal Ambition! from his golden bed
He tries in vain to reach the giddy height;
The shining heap comes tumbling on his head,
And shuts poor Hassan in eternal night!

THE MILLER AND HIS ADVISERS.

AN APOLOGUE.

Of all the fables quaint and old
By *Æsop* or by *Phædrus* told,
For wit or wisdom none surpass
That of The Miller and his Ass;
Which shrewd *Malherbe* of modern France
Invented, — meaning to advance
This wholesome truth, for old and young,
(Here rendered in our English tongue),
That one — however cheap the price —
May take too much of "good advice."
A miller, who had thrived so well
That he had got an ass to sell,
Set forth, one morning, for the fair,
Attended by his youthful heir,
While, trudging on with solemn mien,
The precious donkey walked between.
At length they meet upon the way
Some fellows, less polite than gay,
Who laugh, as if they 'd split their sides,
That neither son nor father rides.
The hint suffices; in a crack
The boy bestrides the donkey's back,
When, presently, three merchants came
Along the road, who all exclaim:
"Get off, you lout! you selfish clod,
To let your aged father plod
On foot, while you the ass bestride;
Dismount, and let your father ride!"
The Miller does as they desire,
Down comes the son, up gets the sire,
And so they go until they meet
A group of damsels in the street,
Who, all in chorus, scream and shout:
"For shame! that one so big and stout
Should ride at ease without a care
About his young and tender heir."
"Gad!" says the Miller, "their advice
Seems mainly wise"; and in a trice
(Though Jack esteems it hardly kind)
He bids the lad get up behind.
Alas! the world is hard to suit;
The Miller now is called a brute
By all he meets upon the road
Who mark the donkey's double load.
In sooth, the Miller and his heir
Were quite as much as he could bear,
And so, at length, the careful twain
Took up the weary ass amain,
And, to the mirth of all beholders,
Bore off the beast upon their shoulders.
Alas! for all the weight they bore,

They still were censured, as before;
The captious rabble followed after
With sneers, and jests, and shouts of laughter.
"The biggest ass," one fellow said,
"Is clearly not the quadruped!"
Another mockingly advised
To have a pet so highly prized
Kept in the parlor from the cold,
Or, for a breastpin, set in gold.
Stunned with the clamor of their mirth,
He drops the donkey to the earth.
"Zooks! they are right," he sighs. "Alas!
'T is clear enough I *am* an ass,
As stupid as this shaggy brute,
Essaying thus all minds to suit.
Egad! despite each meddling elf,
I 'll try henceforth to please myself."

MURILLO AND HIS SLAVE.

A LEGEND OF SPAIN.

"WHOSE work is this?" Murillo said,
The while he bent his eager gaze
Upon a sketch (a Virgin's head)
That filled the painter with amaze.

Of all his pupils, — not a few, —
Marvelling, 't would seem, no less than he;
Each answered that he nothing knew
As touching whose the sketch might be.

This much appeared, and nothing more:
The piece was painted in the night.
"And yet, by Jove!" Murillo swore,
"He has no cause to fear the light.

"'T is something crude, and lacks, I own,
That finer finish time will teach;
But genius here is plainly shown,
And art beyond the common reach.

"Sebastian!" (turning to his slave,)
"Who keeps this room when I 'm in bed?"
"'T is I, Senor." "Now, mark you, knave!
Keep better watch," the master said;

"For if this painter comes again,
And you, while dozing, let him slip,
Excuses will be all in vain, —
Remember, you shall feel the whip!"

Now while Sebastian slept, he dreamed
That to his dazzled vision came
The Blesséd Lady — so she seemed —
And crowned him with the wreath of Fame.

Whereat the startled slave awoke,
And at his picture wrought away

So rapt that ere the spell was broke,
The dark was fading into day.

"My Beautiful!" the artist cried;
"Thank God, I have not lived in vain!"
Hark! 'T is Murillo at his side;
The man has grown a slave again.

"Who is your master? — answer me!"
"'T is you," replied the faltering lad.
"Nay, 't is not that, I mean," said he;
"Tell me, what teacher have you had?"

"Yourself, Senor. When you have taught
These gentlemen, I too have heard
The daily lesson, and have sought
To treasure every golden word."

"What say you, boys?" Murillo cried,
Smiling in sign of fond regard,
"Is this a case — pray you decide —
For punishment, or for reward?"

"Reward, Senor!" they all exclaimed,
And each proposed some costly toy;
But still, whatever gift was named,
Sebastian showed no gleam of joy.

Whereat one said: "He 's kind to-day;
Ask him your Freedom." With a groan
The boy fell on his knees: "Nay, nay!
My father's freedom, — not my own!"

"Take both!" the painter cried. "Henceforth
A slave no more, — be thou my son.
Thy Art had failed, with all its worth,
Of what thy Heart this day has won!"

L'ENVOI

The traveller, loitering in Seville,
And gazing at each pictured saint,
May see Murillo's genius still,
And learn how well his *son* could paint.

HASSAN AND THE ANGEL.

THE Calif Hassan, — so the tale is told, —
In honors opulent and rich in gold,
One New Year's Day sat in a palm-tree's shade,
And, on a stone that lay beside him, made
An inventory, — naming one by one
His benefactions; all that he had done
Throughout the year; and thus the items ran:
"Five bags of gold for mosques in Ispahan;
For caravans to Mecca, seven more;
For amulets to pious people, four;
Three for the Ramazan; and two to pay
The holy dervishes, who thrice a day

In prayer besought the safety of my soul;
Item, one loaf of bread, a weekly dole
To a poor widow with a sickly child."
The Calif read the reckoning o'er, and smiled
With conscious pleasure at the vast amount,
When, lo! a hand sweeps over the account.

With sudden anger, Hassan looked around,
And saw an angel standing on the ground,
With wings of gold, and robe of purest white.
"I am God's messenger, employed to write
Within this book the pious deeds of men;
I have revised thy reckoning: look again."
So to the man the angel spake aloud,
Then slowly vanished in a rosy cloud.
The Calif, looking, saw upon the stone
The final item standing there alone.

FABLES AND LEGENDS

OF MANY COUNTRIES,

RENDERED IN RHYME

TO

MY THREE DAUGHTERS

This Little Book

IS

AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED.

FABLES AND LEGENDS

OF MANY COUNTRIES.

LOVE AND JOY.

AN ALLEGORY.

LONG, long ago, ere *Sin* had come
To make the earth forlorn,
Somewhere, within an Eastern home,
Two pretty babes were born.

The younger was a maiden fair;
The elder was a boy;
And, for their names, the infant pair
Were christened *Love* and *Joy*.

And as they grew in years and strength,
Together they would rove
As merry mates, until at length
Joy seemed the twin of *Love!*

And so, at length, it came to pass
That all the neighbors said,
Some happy day the lad and lass
Were certain to be wed.

In sooth, such happy mates they seemed,
And so attached at heart, —
The pretty pair, — who would have deemed
That they would ever part?

But so it fell; alas, the wrong!
And woe betide the day
That *Sin*, the monster! came along
And frightened *Joy* away!

And so poor *Love*, when *Joy* had flown,
Since he could not abide
To live unwedded and alone,
Took *Sorrow* for his bride;

As sad a bride as e'er was seen
To grace a marriage-bed;
With scowling brow and murky mien,
And cypress round her head.

And to the twain a child was born,
That bore of each a part, —
The mother's countenance forlorn,
The father's tender heart.

"*Pity*," they called her, — gentle child;
And from her infant days
Her voice was ever sweet and mild,
And winning were her ways.

And once, ere she had learned to walk,
While in her cradle-nest,
A dove, that fled the cruel hawk,
Sought safety on her breast.

The robin-redbreast came to seek
A home where *Pity* dwelt;
And all things timorous and weak
Her kind compassion felt.

Ah, sweet, sad face! her mixed descent
Was shown in her attire,
And with the mother's cypress blent
The myrtle of her sire.

And ever since to woman's height
The maiden grew, she roams
Through all the world, an angel bright,
To gladden human homes.

Her office still to follow where
Her mother's feet have strayed,
And soothe and heal, with tender care,
The wounds the dame has made.

But both are mortal, sages write,
And so they both must die;
Sorrow, at last, will cease to smite,
And *Pity* cease to sigh.

And then will *Joy* return, they say,
From Heaven, where she had flown,
And *Love*, forever and for aye,
Be married to his own.

THE TWO CHURCH-BUILDERS.

AN ITALIAN LEGEND.

A FAMOUS king would build a church,
A temple vast and grand;
And, that the praise might be his own,
He gave a strict command
That none should add the smallest gift
To aid the work he planned.

And when the mighty dome was done,
Within the noble frame,
Upon a tablet broad and fair,
In letters all aflame
With burnished gold, the people read
The royal builder's name.

Now when the King, elate with pride,
That night had sought his bed,
He dreamed he saw an angel come,
(A halo round his head,)
Erase the royal name, and write
Another in its stead.

What could it mean? Three times that night
That wondrous vision came;
Three times he saw that angel hand
Erase the royal name,
And write a woman's in its stead,
In letters all aflame.

Whose could it be? He gave command
To all about his throne
To seek the owner of the name
That on the tablet shone;
And so it was the courtiers found
A widow poor and lone.

The King, enraged at what he heard,
Cried, "Bring the culprit here!"
And to the woman trembling sore
He said, "'T is very clear
That you have broken my command;
Now let the truth appear!"

'Your Majesty," the Widow said,
"I can't deny the truth;
I love the Lord, — my Lord and yours, —
And so, in simple sooth,
I broke your Majesty's command,
(I crave your royal ruth!)

"And since I had no money, Sire,
Why, I could only pray
That God would bless your Majesty;
And when along the way
The horses drew the stones, I gave
To one a wisp of hay!"

"Ah! now I see," the King exclaimed,
"Self-glory was my aim;
The woman gave for love of God,
And not for worldly fame;
'T is my command the tablet bear
The pious widow's name!"

THE WIND AND THE ROSE.

AN APOLOGUE.

I.

A LITTLE red Rose bloomed all alone
In a hedge by the highway side;
And the Wind came by with a pitying moan,
And thus to the floweret cried:

II.

"You are choked with dust from the sandy ledge;
Now see what a friend can do!
I will pierce a hole in the tangled hedge
And let the breeze come through."

III.

"Nay, let me be, I am well enough!"
Said the Rose in deep dismay;
But the Wind is always rude and rough,
And of course he had his way.

IV.

And the breeze blew soft on the little red Rose;
But now she was sore afraid,
For the naughty boys, her ancient foes,
Came through where the gap was made.

V.

"I see," said the Wind, when he came again,
And looked at the trembling flower,
"You are out of place; it is very plain
You are meant for a lady's bower."

VI.

"Nay, let me be!" said the shuddering Rose;
"No sorrow I ever had known
Till *you* came here to break my repose;
Now, please to let me alone!"

VII.

But the will of the Wind is strong as death,
And little he recked her cries;

He plucked her up with his mighty breath,
And away to the town he flies.

VIII.

O, all too rough was the windy ride,
For a Rose so weak and small;
And soon her leaves on every side
Began to scatter and fall.

IX.

"Now, what is this?" said the wondering Wind,
As the Rose in fragments fell;
"This paltry stem is all I find, —
I am sure I meant it well!"

X.

"It means just this: that a meddling friend,"
Said the dying stalk, "is sure
To mar the matter he aimed to mend,
And kill where he meant to cure!"

THE BEACON-LIGHT.

A GERMAN LEGEND.

I.

"Go seaward, son, and bear a light!"
Up spoke the sailor's wife;
Thy father sails this stormy night
In peril of his life!

II.

"His ship that sailed to foreign lands
This hour may heave in sight.
O, should it wreck upon the sands!
Go, son, and bear a light!"

III.

He lights a torch, and seaward goes;
Naught boots the deed, I doubt.
The rain it rains, the wind it blows;
And soon the light goes out.

IV.

The boy comes back: "O mother dear,
Bid me not go again;
No torch can live, 't is very clear,
Before the wind and rain!"

V.

"No sailor's blood hast thou, I trow,
To fear a stormy night;
Let rains descend, let tempests blow,
Go, son, and bear a light!"

VI.

Once more he lights the torch, and goes
Toward the foaming main.
The rain it rains, the wind it blows;
Out goes the torch again!

VII.

The boy comes back: "O mother dear,
The storm puts out the light;
The night is drear, and much I fear
The woman dressed in white!"

VIII.

"No sailor's blood hast thou, I trow,
To tremble thus before
A mermaid's face. Take heart of grace,
And seek again the shore!"

IX.

The boy comes back: "O mother dear,
Go thou unto the strand;
My father's voice I sure did hear
In tones of stern command!"

X.

And now the mother lights the torch,
And, see! the kindling rays
Have caught the thatch! from roof to porch
The hut is all ablaze!

XI.

"What hast thou done?" the urchin cries;
"O piteous sight to see!
Cold is the night; O wretched plight!
Nor house nor home have we!"

XII.

"No sailor's blood hast thou, I wis.
When torches fail to burn,
A blazing hovel — such as this —
May serve as good a turn!"

XIII.

Joy to the sailor! see! he clears
The shoals on either hand,
Thanks to the light! and now he steers
In safety to the land!

KING ERIC'S TRIUMPH.

FROM THE GERMAN OF SEIDL.

I.

At Upsala's high altar,
The tallest in the land,
And bright with blazing candles,
See royal Eric stand.
And thus he speaks to Heaven,
With lifted voice and hand:

II.

"Great God! in Thy protection
We ever safely dwell;
Who makes the Lord his refuge
Hath wisely done and well."
And hark! the lofty anthem
The choir and organ swell.

III.

Now while the dome is sounding
With this triumphant strain,
In comes a panting courier,
"O King! the Dane! the Dane!
Skalater and his soldiers
Are pouring on the plain!"

IV.

But as on ears unheeding
The startling message fell;
King Eric still is chanting,
While choir and organ swell,
"Who makes the Lord his refuge
Hath wisely done and well!"

V.

In bursts another courier,
Hot messenger of Fate. —
"The Dane! the Dane approaches!
O King, no longer wait!

Fly! seek some surer refuge;
The Dane is at the gate!"

VI.

What though a hundred voices
The tale of terror tell?
King Eric still is chanting,
While choir and organ swell,
"Who makes the Lord his refuge
Hath wisely done and well!"

VII.

In comes another courier,
But ere his voice he found
To tell his tale of horror,
He feels a mortal wound;
Beneath a Danish sabre,
His head is on the ground.

VIII.

Then rose a fearful clamor,
That drowned the Danish drums:
"With seven hundred soldiers,
The fiend, SKALATER, comes!
Where now are king and country,
Our altars and our homes?"

IX.

'T was then the pious monarch
(As holy books declare)
Took up the golden crucifix,
And waved it in the air,
And called upon the God of Hosts
In agonizing prayer.

X.

And from the seven sacred wounds
(One for each bleeding gash
That in his death the Saviour bore)
Came forth a blinding flash;
In splendor full a hundred-fold,
The heathen to abash.

XI.

Whereat seven hundred Danish men
In humble worship fell;
While Eric and his people all
The solemn anthem swell,
"Who makes the Lord his refuge
Hath wisely done and well!"

THE BRAHMIN'S AIR-CASTLE.

A HINDOO FABLE.

A BRAHMIN, haughty, indolent, and poor,
Entered, one day, a potter's open door,
And, lying lazily upon the ground
Among the earthen-ware that stood around
In stately pyramids, at length began
To think aloud; and thus his fancies ran:
"With these small coins within my pocket, I
Some pieces of this useful ware will buy,
Which, at a profit, I will sell, and then
Will purchase more; and, turning this again
In the same fashion, I will buy and sell
Until my growing trade will thrive so well
That I shall soon be rich; so rich, indeed,
That I can buy whatever I may need
For use or luxury. And first of all

I 'll build a mansion, very grand
and tall;
And then, of course, as suits a man
of taste,
I 'll have four wives, all beautiful
and chaste.
But one in beauty will excel the
rest,
And her, 't is certain, I shall love
the best;
Whereat the others (I foresee it)
will
Be jealous, and behave extremely
ill;
Whereat, as they deserve, I shall
be quick
To beat the vixens well with this
good stick."
And in his revery the fellow struck
Among the pots and pans, (woe
worth the luck!)
With so much force they fell, and
all around
His foolish head the pieces strewed
the ground.
So fell the Brahmin's castle in the
air;
And, further still, to make the
matter square,
And mend the damage done that
luckless day,
With all he had, the potter made
him pay.

L'ENVOI.

This clever Hindoo fable, which
(I 'm told
By grave *savans*) is many centu-
ries old,
Bears its own moral, plain as any
print;
And furnishes, besides, a lively
hint
Whence came that very charming
modern tale,
"The Country Maiden and her
Milking-Pail!"

REASON AND VANITY.

AN APOLOGUE.

"APPEAL to Reason!" writes a
sage
Whose book, on many a glowing
page,
Would teach the reader to control
The workings of the human soul.
The plan, no doubt, is often wise,
But, should it fail, let me advise
('T is safe to try it!) an appeal
The hardest heart is sure to feel;
When Reason turns away her ear,
Who knows but *Vanity* may hear?
As Chloe stood, one summer's
day, —
Young, giddy, handsome, vain, and
gay, —
Before her mirror, and essayed
Her native charms by art to aid,
A vagrant bee came buzzing round,
And Chloe, frightened at the sound,
Cried, "Mary, help! Go, Lizzie,
fetch
A broom and kill the little
wretch!"
Too late! despite the bustling
maids,
The wanton imp at once invades
Poor Chloe's lip, — the saucy
thing!
And fixes there his ugly sting.
The culprit caught, the maids pre-
pare
To kill the monster then and there;
When, trembling for his life, the
Bee
Makes this extenuating plea:
"Forgive! O beauteous queen,
forgive
My sad mistake; for, as I live,
Your mouth (I 'm sorry, Goodness
knows!)
I surely took it for a rose!"
"Poor insect!" Chloe sighed, "I
vow

"'T were *very* hard to kill him now,
No harm the little fellow meant,
And then he seems *so* penitent;
Besides, the pain was very small,
I scarcely feel it now at all!"

WHO SHALL SHUT THE DOOR?

FROM THE GERMAN OF GOETHE.

To-morrow is St. Martin's day,
And Goody, loving elf,
Has baked some puddings for her man,
And put them on the shelf.

Now both are lying snug in bed,
And while the west-winds roar
Old Gaffer unto Goody says,
"Go, shut that slamming door!"

"I wish to rest," the dame replies,
"Till morning's light appears;
For aught I care, that crazy door
May slam a hundred years!"

With this the loving pair agreed
(Since neither of them stirred)
That he, or she, should bolt the door
Who first should speak a word!

Two vagabonds, at midnight, found
The door was off the latch,
And not a single sight or sound
Their eyes or ears could catch.

They entered in, and spoke aloud,
But no one answered. Why?
The bargain stopped the only mouths
That could have made reply!

The puddings soon were eaten up,
As Goody plainly heard,
And cursed the robbers in her heart,
But uttered not a word.

And soon one vagabond exclaims,
"I 'd like a sip of gin;
This cupboard smells extremely nice,
I 'll poke about within.

"A flask of schnapps, I 'm very sure,
Is at my elbow here;
A hearty swig, to thirsty souls,
Is mighty pleasant cheer!"

Up sprang old Gaffer in a trice:
"*Hein!* what is that you say?
The man who steals my Holland schnapps
Shall dearly rue the day!"

Off go the rogues, and Goody cries,
With something like a roar,
"Old Gaffer, you have spoken first!
Now go and bolt the door!"

HOW IT CHANCED.

AN ORIENTAL APOLOGUE.

I.

Dame Nature, when her work was done,
And she had rested from creation,

Called up her creatures, one by one,
To fix for each his life's duration.

II.

The ass came first, but drooped his ears
On learning that the dame intended
That he should bear for thirty years
His panniers ere his labor ended.

III.

So Nature, like a gentle queen
(The story goes), at once relented,
And changed the thirty to eighteen,
Wherewith the ass was well contented.

IV.

The dog came next, but plainly said
So long a life could be but hateful;
So Nature gave him twelve instead,
Whereat the dog was duly grateful.

V.

Next came the ape; but Nature, when
He grumbled, like the dog and donkey,
Instead of thirty gave him ten,
Which quite appeased the angry monkey.

VI.

At last came man; how brief appears
The term assigned, for work or pleasure!
"Alas!" he cried, "but thirty years?
O Nature, lengthen out the measure!"

VII.

"Well then, I give thee eighteen more
(The ass's years); art thou contented?"
"Nay," said the beggar, "I implore
A longer term." The dame consented.

VIII.

"I add the dog's twelve years beside."
"'T is not enough!" "For thy persistence,
I add ten more," the dame replied,
"The period of the ape's existence."

IX.

And thus of man's threescore and ten,
The thirty years at the beginning
Are his of right, and only then
He wins whate'er is worth the winning.

X.

Then come the ass's eighteen years,
A weary space of toil and trouble,
Beset with crosses, cares, and fears,
When joys grow less, and sorrows double.

XI.

The dog's twelve years come on, at length,
When man, the jest of every scorner,

Bereft of manhood's pride and strength,
Sits growling, toothless, in a corner.

XII.

At last, the destined term to fill,
The ape's ten years come lagging after,
And man, a chattering imbecile,
Is but a theme for childish laughter.

THE THREE MASKS.

FROM THE GERMAN OF HARING.

I.

UPON the monarch's brow no shade is shown;
The royal purple hides the bloody throne;
He calls his vassals all, — the man of sin, —
"Bring forth the maskers! let the dance begin!"

II.

The music sounds, and every face is glad, —
All save the King's, and that is something sad;
And, lo! three *snow-white* masks are passing now,
And dark clouds gather on the monarch's brow.

III.

In robes of *red* the maskers now are seen,
And black as midnight is the royal mien.
In *sable* mantles next the three appear,
And the king's face is white with sudden fear.

IV.

And now before the throne, with deep dismay,
He sees three grinning skulls in grim array;
Whereat he falls in terror from his throne!
The masks have fled, and left him there alone.

V.

He calls his vassals: "Let each villain bare
His visage!" No, no juggling rogue is there!
He calls his page: "Now, fellow, get thee gone,
And bring the Soothsayer ere to-morrow's dawn!"

VI.

"Go tell the King," the Wise Man made reply,
"He sends too late. God answers him, not I!
When mortals look on visions such as this,
Their own hearts tell them what the meaning is.

VII.

"The *first* skull," quoth the reverend Sage, "declares
How rank corruption rules the king's affairs;
The *second* says, 'Since corpses prop thy throne,
Mankind shall gaze with horror on thine own!'

VIII.

"The *third* proclaims that whosoe'er has seen
The other twain, before the morrow e'en
Shall be the like himself! Beware, I say,
Beware the sable maskers in the play!"

IX.

Swift flies, at morn, the panting page to bring
The fearful message to the waiting king;
White lies the monarch in his robes of *red*,
On a *black* bier; for lo! the king is dead!

THE GHOST IN ARMOR.

A LEGEND OF ST. MICHAEL'S EVE.

PART FIRST.

SIR WALTER DE GUYON is surly and sad,
There 's trouble a-brewing, I think;
The Steward is certain Sir Walter is mad,
And the Butler declares, "He is took very bad, —
This morning he doubled his drink!"

And why is he ranting and raving, I pray,
And calling his daughter such names?

He stands by the Green in the sturdiest way;
And *Alice* has mounted the Orange to-day,
And laughed at the runaway James!

And then Sir Walter has heard beside,
From one of his vigilant spies,
How Alice his daughter, his darling and pride,
With young De Ruyter, last evening, was spied, —
You may guess at the knight's surprise!

Beneath the casement the maiden was seen,
With this gay gallant at her feet;
Holding her hand his own between,
And calling her "love," and "life," and "queen,"
With kisses many and sweet!

De Ruyter, — a captain of William's band;
And counted a worthy scion
Of an ancient house in the Dutchman's land;
But what is he to offer his hand
To one of the race De Guyon?

De Ruyter, — 'a squire of low degree,"
And an anti-Jacobite war-man;
And what is he, whoever he be,
To match his *de* with the mighty *De*
That was known before "the *Norman*"?

"The saucy varlet!" Sir Walter said;
"The fellow deserves to swing;

Before my castle to show his head!
I 'll serve the dog as I 'd like instead
To serve his villanous king!"

In vain the maiden bemoans his fate;
Already the fierce Sir Walter
Has set his guards at every gate.
He is fain to fly, but all too late;
He is doomed to feel the halter.

There 's a dismal cell, a dungeon, in sooth,
Hard by the banqueting-room,
(Sir Walter de Guyon has little ruth,)
And there, alas! the venturous youth,
De Ruyter, is waiting his doom.

Sir Walter de Guyon is rather elate
At the capital job he has done;
So he summons his friends, the small and the great,
To come and assist at an elegant *fête*,
Devoted to feasting and fun.

PART SECOND.

They are eating and drinking with glee,
The guests at this notable feast;
Lords, nobles of every degree,
All merry as merry can be,
With fifty retainers at least.

In the midst of the revelry rose
Sir Walter de Guyon to say,
"You all are aware, I suppose,
'T is St. Michael's evening," — but shows
Some symptoms of fainting away.

A bottle of Burgundy stood
By chance in the orator's reach,
Which drinking as well as he could,
And swearing the tipple was good,
Sir Walter went on with his speech.

"'T was this very night, as you know,
My ancestor, once on a time,
As sundry old chronicles show
('T was ages and ages ago),
Committed a horrible crime.

"A black-armored knight, it is told,
Who slept in a neighboring room,
Was murdered ('t was thought for his gold), —
The room which now happens to hold
The Dutchman awaiting his doom.

"My ancestor noised it about,
The minions of Justice to blind,
That the stranger arose and went out;
But he never could settle the doubt
Why the man left his armor behind.

"Belike you have heard it before, —
The credulous peasants believe
His ghost, in the armor he wore,
Comes stalking abroad, as of yore,
On every St. Michael his Eve."

"What think you?" he laughingly said,
"Perhaps we may see him tonight;
As often in books we have read —"
Ah! sees he the ghost of the dead?
Why blanches Sir Walter with fright?

What meaneth that terrible din,
  Like the sound of a bursting door?
See! black as the angel of sin,
The Ghost in the Armor comes in,
  And marches across the floor!

Aghast at the horrible sight,
  Down, down they tumble, and lay
Spent with terror and fright,
Through all that terrible night,
  Quite into the following day!

Now where is De Ruyter, I pray,
  And Alice? (she 's vanished from sight!)
There 's a letter from London to say
The lovers had ridden away
  On a saddle and pillion that night.

His manner of leaving, of course,
  His own reprobation had earned;
He owned he was full of remorse
Concerning the armor and horse,
  But both should be quickly returned.

And with her good father's consent,
  That is, should he kindly invite her,
It was Alice's settled intent
To make him a visit in Lent,
  Along with her own De Ruyter!

THE KING AND THE PEASANT.

A SICILIAN TALE.

THERE lived a man who, from his youth,
Was known to all as "Peasant Truth,"
Because 't was said he 'd sooner die
Than tell or hint the smallest lie.
Now, when it happened that the King
Had heard, at last, this wondrous thing,
He bade the peasant come and keep
The royal flock of goats and sheep,
(To wit, — one goat, a little lamb,
A fine bell-wether, and a ram.)
And once a week he went to court
To see the King, and make report
How fared the flock, and truly tell
If each were doing ill or well;
Whereat the King was well content,
And home the happy peasant went.
At last, a wicked courtier — struck
With envy at his neighbor's luck —
Essayed to put him in disgrace,
And gain himself the peasant's place.
"Think you, good Sire, in very sooth,
He never lies, — this Peasant Truth?
He 'll lie next Saturday," he said,
"Or, for a forfeit, take my head!"
"So be it! and I 'll lose my own,"
The King replied, "if it be shown,
With all the arts that you may try,
That Peasant Truth can tell a lie!"
And now the wicked courtier fain
Some trick would try his end to gain.
But still he failed to find a plan
To catch at fault the honest man,
Until at last, in sheer despair,
He told his wife (a lady fair
As one in all the world could find,
And cunning, like all womankind)
About the wager he had made,
And all the case before her laid.
"And is that all?" the woman said,

Tossing in scorn her handsome head;
"Leave all to me, and never doubt
That what you wish I'll bring about!"
Next day the crafty dame was seen,
Apparelled like a very queen,
And on her brow a diamond star,
That like a meteor blazed afar,
Approaching where the peasant stood
Among his flock. "Now, by the Rood!"
He cried, amazed, "but she is fair
And beautiful beyond compare!"
Then, bowing to the earth, quoth he,
"What may your Highness want with me?
Whate'er you ask, I swear to grant!"
"Ah!" sighed the lady, "much I want
Some roasted wether, else shall I
(Such is my longing!) surely die!"
"Alas!" he said, "just this one thing
I cannot do. I serve the King,
Who owns the wether that you see,
And if I kill him, woe is me!"
Alack the day for Peasant Truth!
His tender soul was moved to ruth;
For, weeping much, and saying still
That she should die, she had her will,
And of roast wether took her fill!
"Ah!" sighed the man when she was gone,
"Alas! the deed that I have done!
To kill the sheep! What shall I say
When I am asked, next Saturday,
'How fares the wether?' I will tell
His Majesty the sheep is well.
No, that won't do! I'll even say
A thief has stolen him away.
No, that won't answer. I will feign
Some prowling wolf the sheep has slain.
No, that won't do! Ah! how can I
Look in his face an l tell a lie?"
Now when the peasant came to court
On Saturday, to make report,
As was his wont, the King began
His questioning; and thus it ran:
"How is my goat? I prithee tell!"
"The goat, your Majesty, is well!"
"And how 's my ram?" "Good Sire, the ram
Is well and frisky." "How 's my lamb?"
"He 's well and beautiful, in sooth."
"And how 's my wether, Peasant Truth?"
Whereat he answered, "O my King,
I hate a lie like — anything.
When on the mountain-side afar
I saw the lady with the star,
My soul was dazzled with her beauty,
And I forgot my loyal duty,
And when she asked for wether's meat,
I killed the sheep, that she might eat."
"Good!" said the King, "my wager 's won!
This grievous wrong that you have done,
My truthful peasant, I forgive;
In health and wealth long may you live!
While this, your enemy, instead,
Shall justly lose his foolish head."

THE TRAVELLER AND HIS FRIENDS.

A GALLIC LEGEND.

A GENTLEMAN, about to make
A trip at sea, was begged to take
Commissions for a dozen friends:
One wants a watch; another sends
For wine, — "A very special cask;
And — if it's not too much to ask —
Some choice cigars; a box will do;
Or, while you're at it, purchase two."
Another friend would like a pair
Of boots, — "They're so much cheaper there";
A lady friend would have him buy
Some laces, — "If they're not too high";
Another wants a box of gloves, —
"French kids, you know, are real loves!"
Thus one wants this; another, that;
A book, a bonnet, or a hat;
Enough to make the moody man
(So high their "small commissions" ran
In tale and bulk) repent that he
Had ever thought to cross the sea!
Moreover, — be it here remarked, —
Before the gentleman embarked,
His friends, for fear he might forget
Their little errands, plainly set
Their wishes down in black and white;
A sensible proceeding — quite;
But, as it happened, not a friend
(With one exception) thought to send
The ready money, and to say,
"See, here 's the cash you 'll have to pay."
The man embarks; sees Paris, Rome,
And other cities; then comes home
Well pleased with much that met his eye;
But having, somehow, failed to buy
A single thing for any friend,
Except the one who thought to send
The wherewithal. Well, need I say
That soon his neighbors came to pay
Their greeetings at his safe return,
And charming health; and (also) learn
About their little errands, — what
For each the traveller had got?
"By Jove!" he said, "it makes me sad
To think what wretched luck I had!
For as at sea I sat one day
Arranging in a proper way
The papers you so kindly sent,
A gale arose, and off they went
Into the ocean; nor could I
Remember aught you bade me buy."
"But," grumbled one, "if that were so,
How comes it, sir, you chanced to know
What *this man's* errand was? for *he*
Has got what he desired, we see."
"Faith! so he has, — beyond a doubt;
And this is how it came about:
His memorandum chanced to hold
A certain sum of solid gold;
And thus the paper by its weight
Escaped the others' windy fate."

THE KING'S FAVORITE.

AN ORIENTAL TALE.

A SHEPHERD who was wont to keep
With so much care his flock of sheep,

That not a man in all the plains
Could show the like in fleecy gains,
Was noticed by the King; who said,
"One who so long has wisely led
His woolly charge must surely be
A proper man to oversee
A nobler flock; I make thee, then,
A magistrate, — to govern men!"
"What," mused the shepherd, "shall I do?
A hermit and a wolf or two
My whole acquaintance constitute
(Except my sheep) of man or brute!"
His reason bade the clown decide
Against the place; not so his pride.
Ambition's plea at last prevails,
And lo! the shepherd takes the scales.
Soon as his hermit-neighbor heard
What to the shepherd had occurred,
His honest mind he thus expressed:
"'T is surely but a royal jest,
To make of thee, who never saw
A written page of statute law,
Chief Justice of the realm! I deem
The tale is false, or do I dream?
Ah! princely gifts are fatal things;
Beware, I say, — beware of kings!"
The shepherd listens, but the while
His only answer is a smile,
As one whose happiness provokes
The envy of inferior folks.
"Alas!" the hermit cried, "I see
The fabled wagoner in thee,
Who lost his whip, and by mistake
Took up instead a torpid snake,
That, warming in his fingers, stung
The foolish hand to which it clung,
A mortal bite; do thou, my friend,
Beware the like unhappy end!"
And soon indeed the favorite found
The hermit's plain advice was sound.
The Judge, although he did his best,
Was most unequal to the test;
His judgments, set in legal light,
Were quite as often wrong as right;
And, worst of all, around him rose
A crowd of envious, spiteful foes,
Who, one and all, contrive to bring
The blackest slanders to the King,
Who hears, amazed, the story told
Of justice daily bought and sold.
Indeed, his enemies declare
"His Honor" takes the lion's share,
And with the fruit of bribes alone
Has built a palace of his own.
The King, astounded at his guilt,
Would see the palace he had built;
And finds, when all his search is done,
A modest house of wood and stone.
He opens next the fabled box
Where, fast beneath a dozen locks,
The Judge's famous jewels lie;
But nothing meets the royal eye
Except a shepherd's coat and cap
(The former rent in many a gap),
And — to reward his further look —
A shepherd's rusty pipe and crook.
"O treasure precious to my eyes!"
The Judge exclaims, "from thee arise
No hateful cares, nor envious lies.
These I resume, and learn, though late,
Whoe'er aspires to serve the state
Should first consider well the case,
If he is equal to the place;
And long reflect, before he makes
That most egregious of mistakes, —
One's true vocation weakly spurned,
To serve a trade he never learned."

THE MERCHANT.

A FABLE.

A MERCHANT once, whom Fortune plied
With favors rare on every side,
Grew rich apace; his ships were safe
Though storms might rave and breakers chafe;
To every clime his bending sails
Were wafted by propitious gales;
While others, good and brave as he,
And no less wise on land or sea,
With varying fortunes often tried
The fierce domain of wind and tide,
And paid, sometimes, a goodly freight
In tribute to the Ocean-Fate.
No hidden reef, nor sudden squall,
Nor deadly calm, most feared of all,
Had e'er consigned his vessels' store
To coral grove or rocky shore.
And more than this (so, it is known,
Fate, when she will, can guard her own),
No agent proved an arrant knave,
No master found a watery grave,
No trusted clerk defaulter turned,
No partner stole what both had earned,
Nor market of a sudden fell
Just when his factor wished to sell.

In short, his wines, tobaccos, teas,
Silks, satins, linens, laces, cheese,
His coffee, sugar, raisins, spice,
Were sure to bring the highest price;
And so it was he came to be
The richest merchant on the sea,
And lived — there 's little need to say —
In such a princely sort of way
The King himself could scarce afford
The gems that decked our merchant-lord.

A friendly neighbor, much amazed
At all the wealth on which he gazed,
Said, "Tell me, now, how may it be
That you have come to what we see?"
The merchant, smiling, swelled with pride,
And, like a monarch, thus replied:
"How comes it? — plain enough, I trow;
It comes, my friend, of *knowing how!*"

With growing riches now, indeed,
The trader felt a growing greed,
And, giddy with prosperity,
Stakes all he has again at sea.
But now success no longer paid
The heedless risks the merchant made.
One bark was wrecked because her load,
For want of care, was ill bestowed;
Another (lacking arms, they say)
To ruthless pirates fell a prey;
A third came safe, at last, to land
With goods no longer in demand;
In brief, his ventures proved so bad
He soon was stript of all he had,
And now among his fellow-men,
Was but a common man again.

Once more his friend inquiry made
Whence came disaster to his trade.
"What brought you to this dismal pass?"

"'T was *Fortune*," said the man,
"alas!"
"Indeed? Well, well," the friend replies,
"Although her gold the Dame denies,
She yet may teach you to be wise!"

So goes the world! each thankless elf,
Whate'er may be his worldly state,
Imputes his blessings to himself,
And lays his blunders all to Fate.

THE FORCE OF EXAMPLE.

A FABLE.

A MOTHER lobster, with her daughter
Conversing near their native water,
And closely watching, as she talked,
The style in which the latter walked,
Rebuked her for her awkward way
Of locomotion: "Tell me, pray,"
The matron scolded, "why instead
Of *backward*, you don't go *ahead?*
Such awkwardness! Of course you know
'T is not the proper way to go;
Sure, folks of sense you thus will shock,
And make yourself a laughing-stock!"
"What!" said the child, "do you suppose
I don't know how my *mother* goes?
Shall I adopt the plan you say,
While all the rest go t' other way?
I really have n't got the face
To change the custom of my race;
It need not put you in a passion,
I merely mean to be in fashion;
And, having learned the way from you,
I'll walk — as other lobsters do."

MORAL.

To fix a good or evil course,
Example is of potent force;
And they who wish the young to teach
Must even practise what they preach.

THE SHERIFF OF SAUMUR.

A LEGEND.

ONCE, when the King was travelling through
His realm, as kings were wont to do
In ancient times when royalty
Was deemed a goodly sight to see,
It chanced the Sheriff of *Saumur*,
A city in the royal tour,
Was chosen by the magistrates
To meet the monarch at the gates,
And in a handsome speech declare
How glad and proud the people were
To see his Majesty; and say
Such compliments as subjects pay,
As being but the proper thing,
On such occasions, to the King.
"Sire," said the Sheriff (so the speech
Began, of course), "Sire, we beseech

'our gracious Majesty to hear
he humble words of hearty cheer
With which, great Sire, with which, through me,
The people greet your Majesty.
We are so glad to see you, Sire,
That — that —" And here the speech hung fire.
"So glad — the people of our town —
That — that —" And here the man broke down.
Whereat a courtier said, "I 'm sure
These worthy people of *Saumur*
Are glad, my liege, to see you here;
That seems to *me* extremely clear;
And don't his Honor's speech confess it?
So glad, indeed, they *can't express it!*"

THE TWO WALLETS.

WHY humankind should ever be
So keen their neighbors' faults to see,
While (wonderful to tell!) their own
Are to themselves almost unknown,
This ancient fable clearly shows:
Once on a time, the story goes,
Great Jove, the wise Olympian King,
Proclaimed to each created thing,
That he would hold a special court
Where all might come and make report
Of aught that each might deem it wise
To change in feature, form, or size.
He promised quickly to redress
All imperfections, large or less;
Whatever error or defect
Each in his person might detect.
First came the *Monkey*. Naught had he
Of special fault — that *he* could see!
A paragon of wit and grace,
Who had — almost — a human face!
One seeks a finer form in vain,
Pray, why should such as *he* complain?
"But look at *Bruin!*" cried the ape;
"Was ever such a clumsy shape?
And then, for life, condemned to wear
That ugly suit of shaggy hair!"
"Nay," said the bear, "I find my form
As I could wish. My fur is warm,
And looks, I think, extremely fine,
Good Master Ape, compared with thine.
But see the *Elephant!* his size
Is much too huge; and I advise
(So ludicrous the beast appears)
To stretch his tail, and crop his ears!"
"Nay," quoth the Elephant, who deems
His figure clear of all extremes,
"I can't complain, — I 'm quite content!"
But then he marvelled what it meant
The *Whale* should be so huge and fat!
The *Ant* was sorry for the *Gnat!*
The *Gnat* reproached the tiny *Flea!*
How could one live so small as she?
Thus all the animals, in turn,
The faults of others could discern;
But not a creature, large or small,
His own defects could see at all.

MORAL.

So fares it with the human race,
Who, thanks to Heaven's especial grace,
A double wallet always wear,
All sorts of sins and crimes to bear.
Within the pouch that hangs before
The faults of other folks are thrown;
While, safely out of sight, we store
The hinder pocket with our own.

THE GREAT CRAB.

A GERMAN LEGEND.

I.

NEAR Lake Mohrin, 't is said, by day and night,
The folks all tremble with unceasing fright
Lest the Great Crab, we all have heard about,
By some device should manage to get out!
He 's fastened down below, you see,
And in the strongest way;
For, should he happen to get free,
The deuce would be to pay!

II.

An ugly monster of prodigious strength,
A mile in breadth and twenty miles in length,
He keeps the water foaming in the lake,
And, once on land, what trouble he would make!
For with his backward motion (so
An ancient seer declares)
All other things would backward go,
Throughout the world's affairs.

III.

The Burgomaster — mightiest of men —
Would turn, that day, a sucking child again;
The Judge and Parson, changed to little boys,
Would quit their learned books for tiny toys,
And so with matrons, maids, and men,
All things would be reversed;
And everything go back again
To what it was at first.

IV.

Such mischief to the people! While they eat,
Back to the plate will go the smoking meat,
And thence to pot! The bread will turn again
To flour; the flour go back once more to grain.
Back to the flax (O sight of shame!)
Will go the linen shirt;
The flax return to whence it came,
A linseed in the dirt.

V.

The timber in the house at once will move
As trees again back to the primal grove;

The hens will turn to chickens, in a crack,
The chicks into the eggs again go back,
And these the Great Crab with his tail,
At one prodigious crash,
Will knock, as with a threshing-flail,
To everlasting smash!

VI.

Now Heaven defend us from so dire a fate!
The world, I think, is doing well of late;
And for the Crab, let all good people pray
That in his lake he evermore may stay!
Else even this poor song (alack! How very sad to think!)
With all the rest must needs go back,
And be a drop of ink!

LOVE AND FOLLY.

AN ALLEGORY.

CUPID, we know, is painted blind;
The reason it were hard to find,
Unless, indeed, we may suppose
The fable of Lafontaine shows,
Beyond a reasonable doubt,
How the misfortune came about.
'T is said that on a certain day,
As Love and Folly were at play,
They fell into a warm debate
Upon a point of little weight,
Until, so high the quarrel rose,
From angry words they came to blows.
Love, little used to warlike arts
(Save with his famous bow and darts),
Although he fought with all his might,
Was quickly vanquished in the fight;
Miss Folly dealt him such a slap
Across the face, the little chap
Fell in a swoon, and woke to find
He could not see! — the boy was blind!
Now when his doting mother came
To know the case, the angry dame
Behaved as any mother might
Whose only son had lost his sight.
Whate'er had caused the dreadful deed,
Malicious aim, or want of heed,
Such wrath in Heaven was seldom seen
As Venus showed in speech and mien.
She stunned Olympus with her cries
For vengeance. "What! put out his eyes!
My precious Cupid! Let the jade
Straight down to *Orcus* be conveyed!
That justice may be duly done
On her who maimed my darling son,
And left the lad, bereaved of sight,
To grope in everlasting night!"
While Venus thus for vengeance prayed
On Folly, — thoughtless, hapless maid, —
Great Jove convenes a special court
To hear the case and make report.
In solemn council long they sit
To judge what penalty is fit
The crime to answer; and, beside
Some restitution to provide
(If aught, indeed, they can devise)
For Master Cupid's ruined eyes.

And thus, at last, it was decreed,
That Folly, for her wicked deed,
In part the damage should restore
By *leading* Cupid evermore!

L'ENVOI.

And so it comes that still we see
The maid where'er the boy may be;
Love still is blind; and Folly still
Directs the urchin where she will.

LOVE OMNIPOTENT.

A DIALOGUE OF THE GODS.

ACT I. SCENE: *Hades.*

PLUTO, MERCURY.

PLUTO. My Furies all are getting old, and fill
Their office, I protest, extremely ill;
Go, Mercury, to Earth, and gather there
A score or so; there 's plenty and to spare,
I warrant me, among the womankind,
By use and disposition well designed
For Fury-service of the active sort.
Examine well, and bring me due report.

MERCURY. I 'm off at once! I fancy I can find
Fifty, at least, exactly to your mind;
Sharp-tongued, sour-visaged, malice-loving ladies
Whom others than yourself have wished in Hades!

[*Exit* MERCURY.

ACT II. SCENE: *Olympus:* JUNO'S *boudoir.*

JUNO, IRIS.

JUNO. I 'm much annoyed, good good Iris, with the airs
Of vaunting Venus, — as if all affairs
In Heaven and Earth were under her control!
I hear she boasts that scarce a human soul
Is free from her authority; that all
The people in the world are fain to fall
Upon their knees at her command, and own
No equal goddess on the Olympian throne.

IRIS. Is 't possible?

JUNO. Yes, Iris, worse than that,
She and her boy, (a mischief-breeding brat!)
Who aids his mother by his wicked art
Declare (O shame!) there 's not a female heart
In all the universe — below, above —
Which has not felt the subtle force of love!
An arrant falsehood, spoken just to vex
The Queen of Heaven, and scandalize the sex.
Among the earthly maidens, therefore, go,
And bring me back some evidence to show
That Cytherea says — what is n't so!

IRIS. I fly! and never for a moment doubt
I 'll bring you proofs to wipe the slander out.

[*Exit* IRIS.

ACT III. SCENE: *same as before.* JUNO *reading.*

(*Enter* IRIS.)

IRIS. O gracious Queen, I've had a precious time!
Well, I *must* say, if love is such a crime
As well I know it is, (the more's the pity!)
There's not a place on Earth — hamlet or city —
That is n't full of it! In actual life
'T is the chief topic; fiction, too, is rife
With endless talk about it. On the stage,
In poems, songs, 't is everywhere the rage.
Love, love, was still the theme where'er I went,
In court, cot, castle, and the warrior's tent,
Love-knots, love-plots, love-murders! — such a rush
For love-romances in the papers —
JUNO. Hush!
Do stop your prattle, Iris, and confess
You found *some* souls as yet untainted —
IRIS. Yes!
That is, I *heard* of three, — three virgin breasts
That never once had throbbed at Love's behests.
JUNO. Of course you brought them with you. Three will prove
All are not vassals to the Queen of Love!
IRIS. Well — no — unluckily, the day before
A royal messenger from Pluto's shore
Took them away to grace his grimy court,
His stock of *Furies* being something short.
[JUNO *faints, and curtain falls.*

THE PHILOSOPHER AND THE RUSTIC.

A MORAL HOMILY.

A GRAVE philosopher, whose name
To Scythia gave resplendent fame,
Intent his knowledge to increase,
A journey took through classic Greece,
Where, to his profit and delight,
He saw full many a novel sight,
Towers, temples, people, — and much more,
As brave Ulysses did of yore;
But chiefly he was struck to see
A simple man, of low degree,
Untaught in philosophic page,
But in his life a very sage.
His farm, a little patch of land,
He tilled with such a clever hand,
It yielded all he cared to spend,
And something more to treat a friend.
Approaching where the rustic now
Was clipping at an apple-bough,
The Scythian gave a wondering look
To see him wield his pruning-hook,
Here lopping off a withered limb,
There reaching high a branch to trim,
Correcting nature everywhere,
But always with judicious care.
"Sir," said the Tourist, "tell me why
This wanton waste that meets my eye?

Your husbandry seems rather rough;
Time's scythe will cut them soon enough."
"Nay," said the Sage, "I only dress
My apple-trees, and curb excess;
Enhancing thus, as seems but wise,
My fruit in sweetness, tale, and size."
Returning home the Scythian took
Without delay his pruning-hook,
On all his trees the knife he tried,
And cut and carved on every side,
Nor from his murderous work refrained
Till naught but barren stumps remained.

MORAL.

This Scythian sage resembles those
Who deem their *passions* are their foes;
And who, instead of pruning where
Excess requires the owner's care,
Cut down the tree that God has made
With fierce Repression's cruel blade;
And thus, for future life, destroy
All precious fruit of human joy.

THE GARDENER AND THE KING.

FROM THE GERMAN.

ONCE on a time, at Erivan,
There dwelt a poor but honest man
Who kept a little garden, where
There grew much fruit, so fine and fair,
So large and juicy, ripe and sound,
'T was known for many leagues around.
One day, a neighbor, looking o'er
The autumn's wealth, a goodly store,
Advised the owner thus: "Good man,
Take some of these to Ispahan;
'T will please the King, who, I am told,
Cares more for luxury than gold;
And so your fortune you 'll increase
By many a shining golden piece."
"Faith! so I will!" the man replies.
Then to the market-place he hies;
The finest basket he can find
He buys, then stores it to his mind
With choicest fruit of every sort,
And off he starts for king and court.
Arrived, the Marshal asks his name,
And, learning whence and why he came,
He bade him enter. That's the way
It was in Persia, — and to-day
In every land, except our own,
The same partiality is shown;
The giver finds an open gate,
While he who seeks may stand and wait!
The King, delighted with the fruit,
Returned his thanks, — and would it suit
The worthy man to bring some more?
Ah, that it would! Was e'er before
A man so lucky? Now, the while
He waits to catch the royal smile,
And get his pay, he stares at all
So new and strange — the lofty hall,

And people there; among the rest,
To put his manners to the test,
An ugly little dwarf he spies,
A hunchback of such paltry size
The gardener laughed aloud. Alack!
"The fellow with the crooked back
And bandy legs! — who could have known
That *he* in rank was next the throne?
Though small in size, in honor great,
In fact, Prime Minister of State!"
His Honor scowled and looked around,
And on the stranger grimly frowned.
Enough! the guard, who understand
The hint, now take the chap in hand,
And, quicker than you read the tale,
The gardener finds himself in jail!
Here, quite forgotten, he remained,
Of light and liberty restrained,
For twelve long months; and might, no doubt,
Have been still longer getting out,
Had not the King, grown hard to suit,
Made mention of the finer fruit
The stranger brought a year ago,
And thus his Majesty would know
What it might mean, and why the man
Had come no more to Ispahan?
Now, when the truth was brought to light,
The King — who laughed with all his might
To hear about the strange mishap —
Said, "Go, my men! and bring the chap;
'T is fit I make him some amends."
Forth comes the gardener, and attends
Upon the King, who says, "I've heard
The story, fellow, every word,
And fain some recompense would make;
Indeed, it was a grave mistake,
Although it makes me laugh to split
My sides — ha! ha! — to think of it!
Now, name your wish, — an easy task, —
And I will grant whate'er you ask."
"Then grant me this," replied the man,
"An axe, some salt, an Alkoran.
Well, that will do; of all your store
Those will suffice, — I ask no more."
"Strange things to ask!" exclaimed the King,
"Now tell the meaning of this thing."
"The axe I want to fell the tree
That bore the fruit I gave to thee;
The salt, upon the earth to sow,
That none thereon again may grow;
The Alkoran, that I may swear,
While I enjoy God's blessed air,
That I will never darken more
(With my consent) a palace door!"

THE VISION OF THE FAITHFUL.

Upon the faithful in the common things
Enjoined of Duty, rarest blessings wait.

A pious Nun (an ancient volume brings
The legend and the lesson), while she sate
Reading some scriptures of the Sacred Word,
And marvelling much at Christ's exceeding grace,
Saw in her room a Vision of the Lord,
With sudden splendor filling all the place!
Whereat she knelt, enraptured; when a bell
Signalled her hour to feed the convent's poor;
Which humble duty done, she sought her cell,
And lo! the Vision, brighter than before,
Who, smiling, spake: "Even so is Heaven obtained;
I — hadst thou lingered here — had not remained!"

THE FAIRIES' GIFTS.

In a far-away country, some centuries since,
(If the story is false, it is certainly pleasant,)
Two fairies attended the birth of a Prince,
And, after their custom, each brought him a present.

"I bring him," one whispered, "the eagle's bright vision,
So keen and wide-reaching that even a fly
The monarch may mark with the sharpest precision,
However remote, at a glance of his eye."

"An excellent gift for a sovereign, no doubt,"
The other responds, "is a good pair of eyes;
But an eagle would scorn to be peering about,
With intent to remark the behavior of flies!

"And so to your present I beg to unite
A gift of my choosing, — well suited to kings,
And others no less; to the eagle's keen sight
I add his contempt for all trivial things!"

"In sooth," said the first, "I confess that I think
Your cautious restriction exceedingly wise;
How often it happens that merely to wink
Is the properest use we can make of our eyes!"

THE OLD GENERAL AND HIS KING.

"All men think all men mortal but
Themselves!" says Young. The case is put
Extremely strong, and yet, in sooth,
The statement scarce exceeds the truth.
That is to say, excepting those
So very ill they can't suppose
They've long to live, there's scarcely one
But deems *his* earthly course will run

(Despite some transient doubts and fears)
Beyond his friend's of equal years.
In proof how far such dreams prevail,
Pray mark this old historic tale.
A General whose lengthened term
Of life had found him quite infirm,
Was questioned by his Majesty
(Older, by several years, than he)
About his place of burial. "Where,"
The King inquired with friendly care,
"Pray tell me, would it please you best
Your brave old honored bones should rest?"
"Ah!" said the Soldier," seldom I
Have thought of death; but when I die,
I'd have my grave not quite alone,
But *near* to where they've placed your own!"

SAINT VERENA AND SATAN.

A LEGEND OF THE ALPS.

BELOW Mount Jura lies a vale
Extremely dark and deep and wide,
Where once, if we may trust the tale,
Good Saint Verena lived and died.

A pious damsel, sooth, was she,
Who made her lowly life sublime
With works of grace and charity;
The marvel of her age and clime.
To heal the sick, and teach the young,
And lead the weak in Virtue's ways,
Her daily life, — and every tongue
In all the valley sang her praise,

Save one, — of course the "Evil One," —
Who, being evermore at strife
With pious folks, left naught undone
To end good Saint Verena's life.

Sometimes he turned, the legends say,
A mountain torrent in her path;
In vain! dry-shod she held her way,
Unhurt, despite the Devil's wrath!

And once a murderer, in the night,
The fiend employed to take her life;
In vain! for when his lantern light
Revealed her face, he dropped his knife.

And so it fell the Devil's skill
No harm to Saint Verena brought;
He failed to work his wicked will,
And all his malice came to naught.

Enraged, at last he seized a stone,
Intent at once to crush her dead,
(A rock that weighed at least a ton!)
And held it poised above her head.

Whereat she turned, and at the sight
(Such angel-beauty filled her face)

Poor Satan shuddered with affright,
And fain had fled the holy place!

And in his fear he trembled so
He dropped the stone, — down — down it goes!
To fall on Saint Verena? — No!
It falls instead on Satan's toes!

And since that day he limps about,
Unable more to leap or run;
And, that the story none may doubt,
You still may see the very stone;

With five deep marks on either side,
Which — so the pious peasant hints,
Though wicked sceptics may deride —
Are clearly Satan's finger-prints.

THE SPELL OF CIRCE.

A CLASSIC FABLE.

When all his comrades drank the magic bowl
Of crafty Circe, changing form and soul
Of men to brutes, — wolves, lions, bears, and swine,
Ulysses only, full of strength divine,
And matchless wisdom, 'scaped the siren's snare;
Refused the tempting cup, and (triumph rare!)
Returned another mixed with so much skill
It charmed the charmer to the hero's will,
Till now she promised to restore his men
From beastly shapes to human forms again,
If so they willed — "Pray, let them freely choose,"
The siren said; "but what if they refuse?"
Straight to the brutes their ancient leader ran,
And thus, with joy, his eager tongue began:
"My presence here your quick release secures;
Speak but the word, — for speech again is yours."
The lion answered first: "What, I? a king!
To change my state for such a paltry thing
As a mere cit or sailor? Let me be!
I'm always armed, for I have *claws*, you see!
As monarch of the forest now I range;
Thanks for your kindness, — but I would not change."
Ulysses next approached the shaggy bear:
"Alas! how ill your form and face compare
With those, my friend, that you were wont to show
To courtly dames a little while ago!"
"Indeed," the bear replied, "my present form
Is one I find extremely nice and warm;
And as to features, sir, the ursine race
Have their own notions of a pretty face.

I well remember what I used to be, —
A shivering sailor on the stormy sea;
And, faith! old man, I tell you plump and square,
Compared with such, I'd rather be a bear!"
Next to the wolf the anxious hero came,
And begged the brute to change his ugly name
And office, — "What! destroy the shepherd's flocks?
Sure, such a life a noble nature shocks;
Quit now, my old companion, while you can,
Your thieving trade, and be an honest man!"
"An honest man?" he howled, "nay, who d' ye mean?
Faith! that's a man that I have never seen!
And as to eating sheep, — pray tell me when
They ceased to be the prey and food of men?
Savage? you say; why, men slay men, we find;
Wolves, at the worst, are wont to spare their kind!"
The hog came next. Change back? Not he! to tell
The honest truth, he liked his ease too well;
"Where will you find," grunts out the filthy swine,
"A life so blest with luxury as mine?
To eat and drink and sleep, — grow plump and fat, —
What more, I ask, can mortal wish than that?"
So answered all the rest, the small and great,
Each quite contented with his beastly state;
Each spurning manhood and its joys, to boot,
To be a lawless, lazy, sensual — brute.

THE TWO GRAVES.

A GERMAN LEGEND.

A MAN who long had tried in vain
The doctor's skill to ease the pain
That racked his limbs, until his gout
Scarce suffered him to crawl about,
Though much inclining to despair,
Gave ear to all who spoke him fair,
And told of means that might insure
The end he sought, — relief or cure.
Among a crowd of such, there came,
To proffer help, an ancient dame,
Who, having heard with solemn face
The nature of the patient's case,
Advised him thus: "At early light,
While yet the grass is damp with night,
Go sit upon a good man's grave,
And in the dews upon it lave
Your aching limbs; repeat it thrice;
My word, 't will cure you in a trice.
Next morning at the dawn of day
The cripple takes his weary way
Unto the churchyard; where, upon
A monument of polished stone,
He read with joy: "Here lies a man
Whose living virtues far outran

All words of praise, — a model he
Of Justice, Goodness, Charity."
Enough! the patient takes his seat
And in the moisture bathes his feet
And aching joints; but, sooth to say,
It did not drive his gout away,
Though thrice repeated; nay, he swore
The pain was greater than before.
What next? Near by, a hillock lies
Of grass-grown earth; and so he tries
The dame's prescription once again;
And lo! swift flies the patient's pain;
He drops his staff, and, strange to tell,
His gout is gone, — the man is well!
With grateful heart and beaming face
He turns the sleeper's name to trace;
But no; a slab is there alone,
With not a word upon the stone.

KING PYRRHUS AND HIS COUNSELLOR.

AN APOLOGUE FROM BOILEAU.

QUOTH Cyneas, counsellor and friend
To royal Pyrrhus, — "To what end,
Tell me, O mightiest of kings,
Are all these ships and warlike things?"
"To conquer Rome! — a pretty prize,
And worth the cost," the King replies;
"She 'll prove, I think, a valiant foe;
So, if you please, to Rome we go."
"Well, — Rome reduced, my royal friend,
What conquest next do you intend?"
"The rest of Italy will do
To keep our arms from rusting."
"True.
And then, of course there 's something more —"
"Well, — Sicily, a neighboring shore,
Is worth the having." "Very well, —
What next?" "That is n't hard to tell;
Of such a navy what 's the use
Unless we sail to Syracuse?"
"'T is well, — and, having at command
All these, why, then you 'll stay your hand?"
"No. Syracuse obtained, we 'll make
A trip to Carthage; then we 'll take —"
"Your scheme is vast, I must confess.
Thus you advance till you possess
Arabia, Africa, and what
May lie beyond, — till you have got
The Indian realm; nor resting there,
Extend your broad dominion where
The hardy Scythian dwells. And *then?*"
"Why, then we 'll hasten back again,
And take our ease, and sweetly spend

Our lives in pleasure to the end."
So quoth the King. "Ah!" Cyneas said,
And gravely shook his reverend head,
"Why go so far and pay so dear
For pleasures, Sire, that now and here
We may possess? How much more wise
To take the good that near us lies,
To seize the passing joy, unvext
With anxious care about the next!"

THE FARMER WHO MADE HIS OWN WEATHER.

Once on a time, Lafontaine writes,
Jove, sitting on th' Olympian heights,
Called nimble Mercury to his side,
And bade him publish, far and wide,
"*A farm to let!*" Whereat he flies
Through all the world to advertise
"The finest farm that can be found
For fifty thousand miles around;
To let — on terms quite sure to please
Whoe'er may wish to take the lease!"
Then came the farmers thick and fast
To see the land, — which far surpassed
Their brightest hopes; but in a trice
All fell to higgling at the price.
One said the soil was thin and poor;
Another, that it lacked manure;
And still another man made bold
To say the land was sour and cold;
Each finding fault, with shrewd intent
To cheapen what he wished to rent.
At length, when all had said their say,
And some began to go away,
One, who as yet had held his peace,
Proposed at once to take the lease,
Provided Jove would give him power
O'er cold and heat, o'er sun and shower;
In brief — to sum it all together —
The power to regulate the weather!
'T is granted! So, by Jove's command,
The joyful tenant takes the land.
He rains or shines, makes cold or warm,
Brings down the dew, averts the storm;
Rules, at his will, the wind that blows,
And regulates the winter's snows.
In short, within the narrow range
Of his own acres, makes the change
Of seasons through the varied year.
Alas! the gift proves all too dear!
For, while the farmer sees with pain
His neighbors' lands are rich in grain,
And all that genial Nature yields
In thrifty herds and fruitful fields,
His own, despite his anxious toil,
Proves, at the best, ungrateful soil,
That brings him naught but discontent,
Without a *sou* to pay the rent.
What could he do? — he cannot pay;
And so the man was fain to pray
To be forgiven; with shame confessed

His folly, — who essayed to test
The Power divine that rules above,
And deemed himself more wise
than Jove.

THE PROXY SAINT.

EACH for himself must do his
Master's work,
Or at his peril leave it all un-
done;
Witness the fate of one who sought
to shirk
The sanctuary's service, yet
would shun
The penalty. A man of earthly
aims
(So runs the apologue), whose
pious spouse
Would oft remind him of the
Church's claims,
Still answered thus, "Go thou
and pay our vows
For thee and me" Now, when
at Peter's gate
The twain together had arrived
at last,
He let the woman in; then to her
mate,
Shutting the door, "Thou hast
already passed
By *proxy*," said the Saint, — "just
in the way
That thou on earth wast wont to
fast and pray."

THE TWO WISHES.

AN EGYPTIAN TALE.

IN Babylon, some ages since,
Death took, one day, the reigning
Prince;
And so — 't is needless to be said —
The heir-apparent reigned instead.
(For then as now it was the law
"*Le roi est mort!*" — so "*Vive le
roi!*"
In the same breath the courtiers
sing,
"The King is dead!" — "Long
live the King!")
The son, on looking round to
find
What wealth the sire had left be-
hind,
With other riches — more indeed
Than e'en a king could fairly
need —
A secret chest discovered, where
His sordid sire, with anxious care,
His golden gains had safely stored,
Till now it reached a mighty hoard.
"Great God!" he cried, "O, may
I spend
This ample treasure thou dost lend
In charity, and may I live
Till not a coin remains to give!"
The Vizier, smiling, said, "Good
Sire,
Your noble aim I much admire;
But list, your Majesty, I pray,
To what I heard your father say,
While gazing on this very chest,
Then scarce a quarter full, at
best:
'O gracious God! be it thy will,'
He cried, 'that I may live to fill
This coffer full! Grant, I implore,
This one request, — I ask no
more!'"

THE TRAVELLER AND THE TEMPEST.

AN ORIENTAL TALE.

A MERCHANT, — so the tale is told
In Eastern fable, quaint and old, —

Whom urgent business called to roam
On foot in parts remote from home,
Was caught, one morning, in a shower
Of such extremely pelting power,
The man was fairly drenched with rain;
And, though no saint, for once was fain
To call on Jove in earnest prayer
That he, the pluvious god! would spare
A suffering wretch whose shivering form
Was like to perish in the storm.
But still, though loud his prayers arise,
They fail to pierce the murky skies;
And added vows prove all in vain
To stay the fury of the rain.
And now, since Jove no succor lent,
The traveller growls his discontent
In impious scoffs at Heaven's decrees.
"The gods," he muttered, "sit at ease,
And laugh at us who strive to please
Their vanity with praise and prayer,
And gifts that we can poorly spare;
Meanwhile the very ills they send
They lack the power — or will — to mend!"
With this, he sought a neighboring wood,
To shun the storm as best he could;
When lo! a robber issuing thence,
The man, unarmed for self-defence,
With flying footsteps sought again
The fury of the open rain, —
A friendly barrier now, perchance,
Against the robber's dread advance.
And so it proved, yet, as he fled,
The other, pointing at his head
A well-aimed arrow, would have slain
The fugitive, had not the rain
The moistened bowstring so unnerved,
The dart fell short, and only served
The more to speed the traveller's flight,
Till he was safely out of sight.
Now, when the storm was spent at last,
And all the pain and peril past,
The traveller, resting for a space
Where sunshine made a pleasant place
His limbs to warm, his cloak to dry,
Heard, thundering from the azure sky,
A solemn voice, whose words proclaim
The source celestial whence they came:
"Consider well, O mortal man!
How wise is Heaven's benignant plan;
When skies are black and tempests lower,
Mark not alone the Thunderer's power,
But in his ways, at every turn,
His kindly *providence* discern!"

PAST, FUTURE, AND PRESENT.

AN ALLEGORY.

ONCE on a time — we need not care
Too nicely for the *when* and *where*—
Three princes, who, since Time had birth,

Have ruled three provinces on earth,
Whate'er the scope of human aims,
(*Past*, *Future*, *Present*, were their names,)
Met on a pleasant summer's day,
And talking in a friendly way
Of topics such as neighbors use
For mere companionship, — the news,
The weather, or mayhap the price
Of bullion since the last advice
Touching the royal health, — began
At length to speculate on Man
And his affairs; in brief, on all
Such subtile themes as, since the Fall,
Have puzzled moralists; and then
From such deep talk concerning men
As ranged from Providence to Fate,
They fell at last to sharp debate
About themselves, as, who might be
In power the greatest of the three?

"I," said the *Past*, "must be the one,
Since all things great were surely done
By me, — there 's naught in all the land
But bears the impress of my hand!"
"True," said the *Future*; "yet reflect,
Your doings claim but small respect
Compared with mine, — since all to be
Henceforward will be ruled by me!"
"Nay," said the *Present*, "cease your claims;
What are ye both but sounding names?
All things achieved beneath the sun,
And all on earth that shall be done,
Are mine alone! O'er great and small
The *Present* still is king of all!"

SATIRES.

SATIRES.

PROGRESS.

A SATIRE.

In this, our happy and "progressive" age,
When all alike ambitious cares engage;
When beardless boys to sudden sages grow,
And "Miss" her nurse abandons for a beau;
When for their dogmas Non-Resistants fight,
When dunces lecture, and when dandies write;
When matrons, seized with oratoric pangs,
Give happy birth to masculine harangues,
And spinsters, trembling for the nation's fate,
Neglect their stockings to preserve the state;
When critic-wits their brazen lustre shed
On golden authors whom they never read,
With parrot praise of "Roman grandeur" speak,
And in bad English eulogize the Greek;—
When facts like these no reprehension bring,
May not, uncensured, an Attorney sing?
In sooth he may; and though "unborn" to climb
Parnassus' heights, and "build the lofty rhyme,"
Though Flaccus fret, and warningly advise
That "middling verses gods and men despise,"
Yet will he sing, to Yankee license true,
In spite of Horace and "Minerva" too!

My theme is Progress,—never-tiring theme
Of prosing dulness, and poetic dream;
Beloved of Optimists, who still protest
Whatever happens, happens for the best;
Who prate of "evil" as a thing unknown,
A fancied color, or a seeming tone,
A vague chimera cherished by the dull,
The empty product of an emptier skull.
Expert logicians they!—to show at will,
By ill philosophy, that naught is ill!

Should some sly rogue, the city's constant curse,
Deplete your pocket and relieve your purse,
Or if, approaching with ill-omened tread,
Some bolder burglar break your house and head,
Hold, friend, thy rage! nay, let the rascal flee;
No evil has been done the world, or thee:
Here comes Philosophy will make it plain
Thy seeming loss is universal gain!
"Thy heap of gold was clearly grown too great, —
'T were best the poor should share thy large estate;
While misers gather, that the knaves should steal,
Is most conducive to the general weal;
Thus thieves the wrongs of avarice efface,
And stand the friends and stewards of the race;
Thus every moral ill but serves, in fact,
Some other equal ill to counteract."
Sublime Philosophy! — benignant light!
Which sees in every pair of wrongs, a right;
Which finds no evil or in sin or pain,
And proves that decalogues are writ in vain!

Hail, mighty Progress! loftiest we find
Thy stalking strides in science of the mind.
What boots it now that Locke was learned and wise?
What boots it now that men have ears and eyes?
"Pure Reason" in their stead now hears and sees,
And walks apart in stately scorn of these;
Laughs at "experience," spurns "induction" hence,
Scouting "the senses," and transcending sense.
No more shall flippant ignorance inquire,
"If German breasts may feel poetic fire,"
Nor German dulness write ten folios full,
To show, for once, that Dutchmen are not dull.[9]
For here Philosophy, acute, refined,
Sings all the marvels of the human mind
In strains so passing "dainty sweet" to hear,
That e'en the nursery turns a ravished ear!
Here Wit and Fancy in scholastic bowers
Twine beauteous wreaths of metaphysic flowers;
Here Speculation pours her dazzling light,
Here grand Invention wings a daring flight,
And soars ambitious to the lofty moon,
Whence, haply, freighted with some precious boon,
Some old "Philosophy" in fog incased,
Or new "Religion" for the changing taste,
She straight descends to Learning's blest abodes,
Just simultaneous with the Paris modes!
Here Plato's dogmas eloquently speak,
Not as of yore, in grand and graceful Greek,
But (quite beyond the dreaming sage's hope

Of future glory in his fancy's scope),
Translated *down*, as by some wizard touch,
Find "immortality" in good high Dutch!

Happy the youth, in this our golden age,
Condemned no more to con the prosy page
Of Locke and Bacon, antiquated fools,
Now justly banished from our moral schools.
By easier modes philosophy is taught,
Than through the medium of laborious thought.
Imagination kindly serves instead,
And saves the pupil many an aching head.
Room for the sages! — hither comes a throng
Of blooming Platos trippingly along.
In dress how fitted to beguile the fair!
What intellectual, stately heads — of hair!
Hark to the Oracle! — to Wisdom's tone
Breathed in a fragrant zephyr of Cologne.
That boy in gloves, the leader of the van,
Talks of the "outer" and the "inner man,"
And knits his girlish brow in stout resolve
Some mountain-sized "idea" to "evolve."
Delusive toil! — thus in their infant days,
When children mimic manly deeds in plays,
Long will they sit, and eager "bob for whale"
Within the ocean of a water-pail!

The next, whose looks unluckily reveal
The ears portentous that his locks conceal,
Prates of the "orbs" with such a knowing frown,
You deem he puffs some lithographic town
In Western wilds, where yet unbroken ranks
Of thrifty beavers build unchartered "banks,"
And prowling panthers occupy the lots
Adorned with churches on the paper plots!

But ah! what suffering harp is this we hear?
What jarring sounds invade the wounded ear?
Who o'er the lyre a hand spasmodic flings,
And grinds harsh discord from the tortured strings?
The Sacred Muses, at the sound dismayed,
Retreat disordered to their native shade,
And Phœbus hastens to his high abode,
And Orpheus frowns to hear an "Orphic ode"!

"Talk not, ye jockeys, of the wondrous speed
That marks your Northern or your Southern steed;
See Progress fly o'er Education's course!
Not far-famed Derby owns a fleeter horse!
On rare Improvement's "short and easy" road,
How swift her flight to Learning's blest abode!
In other times — 't was many years ago —

The scholar's course was toilsome, rough, and slow,
The fair Humanities were sought in tears,
And came, the trophy of laborious years.
Now Learning's shrine each idle youth may seek,
And, spending there a shilling and a week,
(At lightest cost of study, cash, and lungs,)
Come back, like *Rumor*, with a hundred tongues!

What boots such progress, when the golden load
From heedless haste is lost upon the road?
When each great science, to the student's pace,
Stands like the wicket in a hurdle race,
Which to o'erleap is all the courser's mind,
And all his glory that 't is left behind!

Nor less, O Progress, are thy newest rules
Enforced and honored in the "Ladies' School";
Where Education, in its nobler sense,
Gives place to Learning's shallowest pretence;
Where hapless maids, in spite of wish or taste,
On vain "accomplishments" their moments waste;
By cruel parents here condemned to wrench
Their tender throats in mispronouncing French;
Here doomed to force, by unrelenting knocks,
Reluctant music from a tortured box;
Here taught, in inky shades and rigid lines,
To perpetrate equivocal "designs";
"Drawings" that prove their title plainly true,
By showing nature "drawn," and "quartered" too!
In ancient times, I've heard my grandam tell,
Young maids were taught to read, and write, and spell;
(Neglected arts! once learned by rigid rules,
As prime essentials in the "common schools";)
Well taught beside in many a useful art
To mend the manners and improve the heart;
Nor yet unskilled to turn the busy wheel,
To ply the shuttle, and to twirl the reel,
Could thrifty tasks with cheerful grace pursue,
Themselves "accomplished," and their duties too.
Of tongues, each maiden had but one, 't is said,
(Enough, 't was thought, to serve a lady's head,)
But that was English, — great and glorious tongue
That Chatham spoke, and Milton, Shakespeare, sung!
Let thoughts too idle to be fitly dressed
In sturdy Saxon be in French expressed;
Let lovers breathe Italian, — like, in sooth,
Its singers, soft, emasculate, and smooth;
But for a tongue whose ample powers embrace
Beauty and force, sublimity and grace,

Ornate or plain, harmonious, yet strong,
And formed alike for eloquence and song,
Give me the English, — aptest tongue to paint
A sage or dunce, a villain or a saint,
To spur the slothful, counsel the distressed,
To lash the oppressor, and to soothe the oppressed,
To lend fantastic Humor freest scope
To marshal all his laughter-moving troop,
Give Pathos power, and Fancy lightest wings,
And Wit his merriest whims and keenest stings!

The march of Progress let the Muse explore
In pseudo-science and empiric lore.
O sacred Science! how art thou profaned,
When shallow quacks and vagrants, unrestrained,
Flaunt in thy robes, and vagabonds are known
To brawl thy name, who never wrote their own;
When crazy theorists their addled schemes
(Unseemly product of dyspeptic dreams)
Impute to thee! — as courtesans of yore
Their spurious bantlings left at Mars's door;
When each projector of a patent pill,
Or happy founder of a coffee-mill,
Invokes thine aid to celebrate his wares,
And crown with gold his philanthrophic cares;
Thus Islam's hawkers piously proclaim
Their figs and pippins in the Prophet's name!

Some sage Physician, studious to advance
The art of healing, and its praise enhance,
By observation "scientific" finds
(What else were hidden from inferior minds)
That Water 's useful in a thousand ways,
To cherish health, and lengthen out our days;
A mighty solvent in its simple scope,
And quite "specific" with Castilian soap!
The doctor's labors let the thoughtless scorn,
See! a new "science" to the world is born;
"Disease is dirt! all pain the patient feels
Is but the soiling of the vital wheels;
To wash away all particles impure,
And cleanse the system, plainly is to cure!"
Thus shouts the doctor, eloquent, and proud
To teach his "science" to the gaping crowd;
Like "Father Mathew," eager to allure
Afflicted mortals to his "water-cure"!

'T is thus that modern "sciences" are made,
By bold assumption, puffing, and parade.
Take three stale "truths"; a dozen "facts," assumed;
Two known "effects," and fifty more presumed;
"Affinities" a score, to sense unknown,
And, just as "*lucus, non lucendo*" shown,

Add but a name of pompous Anglo-Greek,
And only not impossible to speak,
The work is done; a "science" stands confest,
And countless welcomes greet the queenly guest.

In closest girdle, O reluctant Muse,
In scantiest skirts, and lightest-stepping shoes,[10]
Prepare to follow Fashion's gay advance,
And thread the mazes of her motley dance:
And, marking well each momentary hue,
And transient form, that meets the wondering view,
In kindred colors, gentle Muse, essay
Her Protean phases fitly to portray.
To-day, she slowly drags a cumbrous trail,
And "Ton" rejoices in its length of tail;
To-morrow, changing her capricious sport,
She trims her flounces just as much too short;
To-day, right jauntily, a hat she wears
That scarce affords a shelter to her ears;
To-morrow, haply, searching long in vain,
You spy her features down a Leghorn lane;
To-day, she glides along with queenly grace,
To-morrow, ambles in a mincing pace.
To-day, erect, she loves a martial air,
And envious train-bands emulate the fair;
To-morrow, changing as her whim may serve,
"She stoops to conquer" in a "Grecian curve."[11]
To day, with careful negligence arrayed
In scanty folds, of woven zephyrs made,
She moves like Dian in her woody bowers,
Or Flora floating o'er a bed of flowers;
To-morrow, laden with a motley freight,
Of startling bulk and formidable weight,
She waddles forth, ambitious to amaze
The vulgar crowd, who giggle as they gaze.

Despotic Fashion! potent is her sway,
Whom half the world full loyally obey;
Kings bow submissive to her stern decrees,
And proud Republics bend their necks and knees;
Where'er we turn the attentive eye, is seen
The worshipped presence of the modish queen;
In Dress, Philosophy, Religion, Art,
Whate'er employs the head, or hand, or heart.

Is some fine lady quite o'ercome with woes,
From an unyielding pimple on her nose,
Some unaccustomed "buzzing in her ears,"
Or other marvel to alarm her fears?
Fashion, with skill and judgment ever nice,
At once advises "medical advice"!

Then names her doctor, who, arrived in haste,
Proceeds accordant with the laws of taste.
If real ills afflict the modish dame,
Her blind idolatry is still the same;
Less grievous far, she deems it, to endure
Genteel malpractice, than a vulgar cure.
If, spite of gilded pills and golden fees,
Her dear dyspepsia grows a dire disease,
And Doctor Dapper proves a shallow rogue,
The world must own that both were much in vogue.

What impious mockery, when, with soulless art,
Fashion, intrusive, seeks to rule the heart!
Directs how grief may tastefully be borne;
Instructs Bereavement just how long to mourn;
Shows Sorrow how by nice degrees to fade,
And marks its measure in a ribbon's shade!
More impious still, when, through her wanton laws,
She desecrates Religion's sacred cause;
Shows how "the narrow road" is easiest trod,
And how, genteelest, worms may worship God;
How sacred rites may bear a worldly grace,
And self-abasement wear a haughty face;
How sinners, long in Folly's mazes whirled,
With pomp and splendor may "renounce the world";
How, "with all saints hereafter to appear,"
Yet quite escape the vulgar portion here!

Imperial Fashion! her impartial care
Things most momentous, and most trivial, share.
Now crushing conscience (her invet'rate foe),
And now a waist, and now, perchance, a toe.
At once for pistols and "the Polka" votes,
And shapes alike our characters and coats.
The gravest question which the world divides,
And lightest riddle, in a breath decides:
"If wrong may not, by circumstance, be right,"—
"If black cravats be more genteel than white,"—
"If by her 'bishop,' or her 'grace,' alone,
A genuine lady, or a church, is known";—
Problems like these she solves with graceful air,
At once a casuist and a connoisseur.

Does some sleek knave, whom magic money-bags
Have raised above his fellow-knaves in rags,
Some willing minion of unblushing Vice,
Who boasts that "Virtue ever has her price,"—
Does he, unpitying, blast thy sister's fame,
Or doom thy daughter to undying shame,

To bow her head beneath the eye of scorn,
And droop and wither in her maiden morn?
Fashion "regrets," declares "'t was very wrong,"
And, quite dejected, hums an opera song.
Impartial friend, your cause to her appealed,
Yourself and foe she summons to the field,
Where Honor carefully the case observes,
And nicely weighs it in a scale of nerves.
Despotic rite! whose fierce, vindictive reign
Boasts, unrebuked, its countless victims slain,
While Christian rulers, recreant, support
The pagan honors of thy bloody court,
And "Freedom's champions" spurn their hallowed trust,
Kneel at thy nod, and basely lick the dust.

Degraded Congress! once the honored scene
Of patriot deeds; where men of solemn mien,
In virtue strong, in understanding clear,
Earnest, though courteous, and, though smooth, sincere,
To gravest counsels lent the teeming hours,
And gave their country all their mighty powers.
But times are changed, a rude, degenerate race
Usurp the seats, and shame the sacred place.
Here plotting demagogues with zeal defend
The "people's rights," — to gain some private end.
Here Southern youths, on Folly's surges tost,
Their fathers' wisdom eloquently boast.
(So dowerless spinsters proudly number o'er
The costly jewels that their grandams wore.)
Here would-be Tullys pompously parade
Their tumid tropes for simple "Buncombe" made,[12]
Full on the chair the chilling torrent shower,
And work their word-pumps through the allotted hour.
Deluded "Buncombe!" while, with honest praise,
She notes each grand and patriotic phrase,
And, much rejoicing in her hopeful son,
Deems all her own the laurels he has won,
She little dreams how brother members fled,
And left the house as vacant as his head!
Here rural Chathams, eager to attest
The "growing greatness of the mighty West,"
To make the plainest proposition clear,
Crack Priscian's head, and Mr. Speaker's ear;
Then, closing up in one terrific shout,
Pour all their "wild-cats" furiously out!
Here lawless boors with ruffian bullies vie,
Who last shall give the rude, insulting "lie,"
While "Order! order!" loud the chairman calls,

And echoing "Order!" every member bawls;
Till rising high in rancorous debate,
And higher still in fierce envenomed hate, [13]
Retorted blows the scene of riot crown,
And big Lycurgus knocks the lesser down!

Ye honest dames in frequent proverbs named,
For finest fish and foulest English famed,
Whose matchless tongues, 't is said, were never heard
To speak a flattering or a feeble word, —
Here all your choice invective ye might urge
Our lawless Solons fittingly to scourge;
Here, in congenial company, might rail
Till, quite worn out, your creaking voices fail, —
Unless, indeed, for once compelled to yield
In wordy strife, ye vanquished quit the field!

Hail, Social Progress! each new moon is rife
With some new theory of social life,
Some matchless scheme ingeniously designed
From half their miseries to free mankind;
On human wrongs triumphant war to wage,
And bring anew the glorious golden age.
"Association" is the magic word
From many a social "priest and prophet" heard,
"Attractive Labor" is the angel given,
To render earth a sublunary Heaven!
"Attractive Labor!" ring the changes round,
And labor grows attractive in the sound;
And many a youthful mind, where haply lurk
Unwelcomed fancies at the name of "work,"
Sees pleasant pastime in its longing view
Of "toil made easy" and "attractive" too,
And, fancy-rapt, with joyful ardor, turns
Delightful grindstones and seductive churns!
"Men are not bad," these social sages preach;
"Men are not what their actions seem to teach;
No moral ill is natural or fixed, —
Men only err by being badly mixed!"
To them the world a huge plum-pudding seems,
Made up of richest viands, fruits, and creams,
Which of all choice ingredients partook,
And then was ruined by a blundering cook!

Inventive France! what wonder-working schemes
Astound the world whene'er a Frenchman dreams.
What fine-spun theories, — ingenious, new,
Sublime, stupendous, everything but true!
One little favor, O "Imperial France"!
Still teach the world to cook, to dress, to dance;

Let, if thou wilt, thy boots and barbers roam,
But keep thy morals and thy creeds at home!

O might the Muse prolong her flowing rhyme,
(Too closely cramped by unrelenting Time,
Whose dreadful scythe swings heedlessly along,
And, missing speeches, clips the thread of song,)
How would she strive, in fitting verse, to sing
The wondrous Progress of the Printing King!
Bibles and Novels, Treatises and Songs,
Lectures on "Rights," and Strictures upon Wrongs;
Verse in all metres, Travels in all climes,
Rhymes without reason, Sonnets without rhymes;
"Translations from the French," so vilely done,
The wheat escaping leaves the chaff alone;
Memoirs, where dunces sturdily essay
To cheat Oblivion of her certain prey;
Critiques, where pedants vauntingly expose
Unlicensed verses, in unlawful prose;
Lampoons, whose authors strive in vain to throw
Their headless arrows from a nerveless bow;
Poems by youths, who, crossing Nature's will,
Harangue the landscape they were born to till;
Huge tomes of Law, that lead by rugged routes
Through ancient dogmas down to modern doubts;
Where Judges oft, with well-affected ease,
Give learned reasons for absurd decrees,
Or, more ingenious still, contrive to found
Some just decision on fallacious ground,
Or blink the point, and, haply, in its place,
Moot and decide some hypothetic case;
Smart Epigrams, all sadly out of joint,
And pointless, — save the "exclamation point,"
Which stands in state, with vacant wonder fraught,
The pompous tombstone of some pauper thought;
Ingenious systems based on doubtful facts,
"Tracts for the Times," and most untimely tracts;
Polemic Pamphlets, Literary Toys,
And Easy Lessons for uneasy boys;
Hebdomadal Gazettes, and Daily News,
Gay Magazines, and Quarterly Reviews: —
Small portion these, of all the vast array
Of darkened leaves that cloud each passing day,
And pour their tide unceasingly along,
A gathering, swelling, overwhelming throng!

Cease, O my Muse, nor, indiscreet, prolong
To epic length thy unambitious song.
Good friends, be gentle to a maiden Muse,

Her errors pardon, and her faults excuse.
Not uninvited to her task she came,[14]
To sue for favor, not to seek for fame.
Be this, at least, her just though humble praise:
No stale excuses heralded her lays,
No singer's trick, — conveniently to bring
A sudden cough, when importuned to sing;[15]
No deprecating phrases, learned by rote, —
"She 'd quite forgot," or "never knew a note," —
But to her task, with ready zeal, addressed
Her earnest care, and aimed to do her best;
Strove to be just in each satiric word,
To doubtful wit undoubted truth preferred,
To please and profit equally has aimed,
Nor been ill-natured even when she blamed.

THE MONEY-KING.

A POEM DELIVERED BEFORE THE PHI BETA KAPPA SOCIETY OF YALE COLLEGE, 1854.

As landsmen, sitting in luxurious ease,
Talk of the dangers of the stormy seas;
As fireside travellers, with portentous mien,
Tell tales of countries they have never seen;
As parlor-soldiers, graced with fancy-scars,
Rehearse their bravery in imagined wars;
As arrant dunces have been known to sit
In grave discourse of wisdom and of wit;
As paupers, gathered in congenial flocks,
Babble of banks, insurances, and stocks;
As each is oftenest eloquent of what
He hates or covets, but possesses not; —
As cowards talk of pluck; misers, of waste;
Scoundrels, of honor; country clowns, of taste; —
I sing of MONEY! — no ignoble theme,
But loftier far than poetasters dream,
Whose fancies, soaring to their native moon,
Rise like a bubble or a gay balloon,
Whose orb aspiring takes a heavenward flight,
Just in proportion as it 's thin and light!

Kings must have Poets. From the earliest times,
Monarchs have loved celebrity in rhymes;
From good King Robert, who, in Petrarch's days,
Taught to mankind the proper use of bays,
And, singling out the prince of Sonneteers,
Twined wreaths of laurel round his blushing ears;

Down to the Queen, who, to her chosen bard,
In annual token of her kind regard,
Sends not alone the old poetic greens,
But, like a woman and the best of queens,
Adds to the leaves, to keep them fresh and fine,
The wholesome moisture of a pipe of wine! —
So may her minstrel, crowned with royal bays,
Alternate praise her pipe and pipe her praise!
E'en let him chant his smooth, euphonious lays:
A loftier theme my humbler Muse essays;
A mightier monarch be it hers to sing,
And claim her laurel from the Money-King!

Great was King Alfred; and if history state
His actions truly, good as well as great.
Great was the Norman; he whose martial hordes
Taught law and order to the Saxon lords,
With gentler thoughts their rugged minds imbued,
And raised the nation whom he first subdued.
Great was King Bess! — I see the critic smile,
As though the Muse mistook her proper style;
But to her purpose she will stoutly cling,
The royal maid was "every inch a King"!
Great was Napoleon, — and I would that fate
Might prove his namesake-nephew half as great;
Meanwhile this hint I venture to advance: —
What France admires is good enough for France!
Great princes were they all; but greater far
Than English King, or mighty Russian Czar,
Or Pope of Rome, or haughty Queen of Spain,
Baron of Germany, or Royal Dane,
Or Gallic Emperor, or Persian Khan,
Or any other merely mortal man,
Is the great monarch that my Muse would sing,
That mighty potentate, the Money-King!
His kingdom vast extends o'er every land,
And nations bow before his high command,
The weakest tremble, and his power obey,
The strongest honor, and confess his sway.
He rules the Rulers! — e'en the tyrant Czar
Asks his permission ere he goes to war;
The Turk, submissive to his royal might,
By his decree has gracious leave to fight;
Whilst e'en Britannia makes her humblest bow
Before her Barings, not her Barons now,
Or on the Rothschild suppliantly calls
(Her affluent "uncle" with the golden balls),
Begs of the Jew that he will kindly spare
Enough to put her trident in repair,

And pawns her diamonds, while she humbly craves
The Money-King's consent to "rule the waves!"

He wears no crown upon his royal head,
But many millions in his purse, instead;
He keeps no halls of state; but holds his court
In dingy rooms where greed and thrift resort;
In iron chests his wondrous wealth he hoards;
Banks are his parlors; brokers are his lords,
Bonds, bills, and mortgages, his favorite books,
Gold is his food, and coiners are his cooks;
Ledgers his records; stock reports his news;
Merchants his yeomen, and his bondsmen Jews;
Kings are his subjects, gamblers are his knaves,
Spendthrifts his fools, and misers are his slaves!
The good, the bad, his golden favor prize,
The high, the low, the simple, and the wise,
The young, the old, the stately, and the gay, —
All bow obedient to his royal sway!
See where, afar, the bright Pacific shore
Gleams in the sun with sands of shining ore,
His last, great empire rises to the view,
And shames the wealth of India and Peru!
Here, throned within his gorgeous "golden gate,"
He wields his sceptre o'er the rising State;
Surveys his conquest with a joyful eye,
Nor for a greater heaves a single sigh!
Here, quite beyond the classic poet's dream,
Pactolus runs in every winding stream;
The mountain cliffs the glittering ore enfold,
And every reed that rustles whispers, "Gold!"

If to his sceptre some dishonor clings,
Why should we marvel? — 't is the fate of kings!
Their power too oft perverted by abuse,
Their manners cruel, or their morals loose,
The best at times have wandered far astray
From simple Virtue's unseductive way;
And few, of all, at once could make pretence
To royal robes and rustic innocence!

He builds the house where Christian people pray,
And rears a bagnio just across the way;
Pays to the priest his stinted annual fee;
Rewards the lawyer for his venal plea;
Sends an apostle to the heathen's aid;
And cheats the Choctaws, for the good of trade;
Lifts by her heels an Ellsler to renown,

Or, bribing "Jenny," brings an angel down!
He builds the Theatres and gambling Halls,
Lloyds and Almacks St. Peter's and St. Paul's;
Sin's gay retreats and Fashion's gilded rooms,
Hotels and Factories, Palaces and Tombs;
Bids Commerce spread her wings to every gale:
Bends to the breeze the pirate's bloody sail;
Helps Science seek new worlds among the stars;
Profanes our own with mercenary wars;
The friend of wrong, the equal friend of right,
Oft may we bless and oft deplore his might,
As buoyant hope or darkening fears prevail,
And good or evil turns the moral scale.

All fitting honor I would fain accord,
Whene'er he builds a temple to the Lord;
But much I grieve he often spends his pelf,
As it were raised in honor of himself;
Or, what were worse, and more profanely odd,
A place to worship some Egyptian god!
I wish his favorite architects were graced
With sounder judgment, and a Christian taste.
Immortal Wren! what fierce, convulsive shocks
Would jar thy bones within their leaden box,
Couldst thou but look across the briny spray,
And see some churches of the present day!—
The lofty dome of consecrated bricks,
Where all the "orders" in disorder mix,
To form a temple whose incongruous frame
Confounds design and puts the Arts to shame!
Where "styles" discordant on the vision jar,
Where Greek and Roman are again at war,
And, as of old, the unrelenting Goth
Comes down at last and overwhelms them both!

Once on a time I heard a parson say
(Talking of churches in a sprightly way),
That there was more Religion in the walls
Of towering "Trinity," or grand "St. Paul's,"
Than one could find, upon the strictest search,
In half the saints within the Christian Church!
A layman sitting at the parson's side
To this new dogma thus at once replied:
"If, as you say, Religion has her home
In the mere walls that form the sacred dome,
It seems to me the very plainest case,
To climb the steeple were a growth in grace;
And he to whom the pious strength were given
To reach the highest were the nearest Heaven!"

I thought the answer just; and yet
't is clear
A solemn aspect, grand and yet
severe,
Becomes the house of God. 'T is
hard to say
Who from the proper mark are
most astray, —
They who erect, for holy Christian
rites,
A gay Pagoda with its tinsel lights,
Or they who offer to the God of
Love
A gorgeous Temple of the pagan
Jove!

Immortal Homer and Tassoni sing
What vast results from trivial
causes spring;
How naughty Helen by her stolen
joy
Brought woe and ruin to unhappy
Troy;
How, for a bucket, rash Bologna
sold
More blood and tears than twenty
such could hold!
Thy power, O Money, shows results as strange
As aught revealed in History's
widest range;
Thy smallest coin of shining silver
shows
More potent magic than a conjurer
knows!
In olden times, — if classic poets
say
The simple truth, as poets do today, —
When Charon's boat conveyed a
spirit o'er
The Lethean water to the Hadean
shore,
The fare was just a penny, — not
too great,
The moderate, regular, Stygian
statute rate.

Now, for a shilling, he will cross
the stream,
(His paddles whirling to the force
of steam!)
And bring, obedient to some wizard
power,
Back to the Earth more spirits in
an hour
Than Brooklyn's famous ferry
could convey,
Or thine, Hoboken, in the longest
day!
Time was when men bereaved of
vital breath
Were calm and silent in the realms
of Death;
When mortals dead and decently
inurned
Were heard no more; no traveller
returned,
Who once had crossed the dark
Plutonian strand,
To whisper secrets of the spirit-
land, —
Save when perchance some sad,
unquiet soul
Among the tombs might wander
on parole, —
A well-bred ghost, at night's bewitching noon,
Returned to catch some glimpses
of the moon,
Wrapt in a mantle of unearthly
white
(The only '*rapping* of an ancient
sprite),
Stalked round in silence till the
break of day,
Then from the Earth passed unperceived away.
Now all is changed: the musty
maxim fails,
And dead men *do* repeat the queerest tales!
Alas, that here, a in the books,
we see
The travellers clash, the doctors
disagree!

Alas, that all, the farther they explore,
For all their search are but confused the more!
Ye great departed! — men of mighty mark, —
Bacon and Newton, Adams, Adam Clarke,
Edwards and Whitefield, Franklin, Robert Hall,
Calhoun, Clay, Channing, Daniel Webster, — all
Ye great quit-tenants of this earthly ball, —
If in your new abodes ye cannot rest,
But must return, O, grant us this request:
Come with a noble and celestial air,
To prove your title to the names ye bear!
Give some clear token of your heavenly birth,
Write as good English as ye wrote on earth!
Show not to all, in ranting prose and verse,
The spirit's progress is from bad to worse;
And, what were once superfluous to advise,
Don't tell, I beg you, such egregious lies;
Or if perchance your agents are to blame,
Don't let them trifle with your honest fame;
Let chairs and tables rest, and "rap" instead,
Ay, "knock" your slippery "Mediums" on the head!

What direful woes the hapless man attend,
Who in the means sees life's supremest end;
The wretched miser, — money's sordid slave, —
His only joy to gather and to save.
For this he wakes at morning's early light,
Toils through the day, and ponders in the night;
For this, — to swell his heap of tarnished gold, —
Sweats in the sun, and shivers in the cold,
And suffers more from hunger every day
Than the starved beggar whom he spurns away.
Death comes erewhile to end his worldly strife;
With all his saving he must lose his life!
Perchance the doctor might protract his breath,
And stay the dreadful messenger of death;
But none is there to comfort or advise;
'T would cost a dollar; — so the miser dies.

Sad is the sight when Money's power controls
In wedlock's chains the fate of human souls.
From mine to mint, curst is the coin that parts
In helpless grief two loving human hearts;
Or joins in discord, jealousy, and hate,
A sordid suitor to a loathing mate.
I waive the case, the barren case, of those
Who have no hearts to cherish or to lose;
Whose wedded state is but a bargain made
In due accordance with the laws of trade.
When the prim parson joins their willing hands,

To marry City lots to Western lands,
Or in connubial ecstasy to mix
Cash and "collateral," ten-per-cents with six,
And in the "patent safe" of Hymen locks
Impassioned dollars with enamoured stocks,
Laugh if you will, — and who can well refrain? —
But waste no tears, nor pangs of pitying pain;
Hearts such as these may play the queerest pranks,
But never break, — except with breaking banks.

Yet, let me hint, a thousand maxims prove
Plutus may be the truest friend to Love.
"Love in a cottage" cosily may dwell,
But much prefers to have it furnished well.
A parlor ample, and a kitchen snug,
A handsome carpet, an embroidered rug,
A well-stored pantry, and a tidy maid,
A blazing hearth, a cooling window-shade,
Though merely mortal, money-purchased things,
Have wondrous power to clip Love's errant wings!
"Love in a cottage" is n't just the same
When wind and water strive to quench his flame;
Too oft it breeds the sharpest discontent,
That puzzling question, "How to pay the rent";
A smoky chimney may alone suffice
To dim the radiance of the fondest eyes;
A northern blast, beyond the slightest doubt,
May fairly blow the torch of Hymen out;
And I have heard a worthy matron hold
(As one who knew the truth of what she told),
Love once was drowned, though reckoned waterproof,
By the mere dripping of a leaky roof!

Full many a wise philosopher has tried
Mankind in fitting orders to divide;
And by their forms, their fashions, and their face,
To group, assort, and classify the race.
One would distinguish people by their books;
Another, quaintly, solely by their cooks;
And one, who graced the philosophic bench,
Found these three classes, — "women, men, and *French!*"
The best remains, of all that I have known,
A broad distinction, brilliant, and my own:
Of all mankind, I classify the lot,
Those who *have Money*, and those who have *not!*

Think'st thou the line a poet's fiction? — then
Go look abroad upon the ways of men!
Go ask the banker, with his golden seals;
Go ask the borrower, cringing at his heels;
Go ask the maid, who, emulous of woe,

Discards the worthier for the wealthier beau;
Go ask the parson, when a higher prize
Points with the salary where his *duty* lies;
Go ask the lawyer, who, in legal smoke,
Stands, like a stoker, redolent of "Coke,"
And swings his arms to emphasize a plea
Made doubly ardent by a golden fee;
Go ask the doctor, who has kindly sped
Old Crœsus, dying on a damask bed,
While his poor neighbor — wonderful to tell —
Was left to Nature, suffered, and got well!
Go ask the belle, in high patrician pride,
Who spurns the maiden nurtured at her side,
Her youth's loved playmate at the village-school,
Ere changing fortune taught the rigid rule
Which marks the loftier from the lowlier lot, —
Those who have money from those who have not!

Of all the ills that owe their baneful rise
To wealth o'ergrown, the most despotic vice
Is Circean Luxury; prolific dame
Of mental impotence and moral shame,
And all the cankering evils that debase
The human form and dwarf the human race.
See yon strange figure, and a moment scan
That slenderest sample of the genus man!
Mark, as he ambles, those precarious pegs
Which by their motion must be deemed his legs!
He has a head, — one may be sure of that
By just observing that he wears a hat;
That he has arms is logically plain
From his wide coat-sleeves and his pendent cane;
A tongue as well, — the inference is fair,
Since, on occasion, he can lisp and swear.
You ask his use? — that's not so very clear,
Unless to spend five thousand pounds a year
In modish vices which his soul adores,
Drink, dress, and gaming, horses, hounds, and scores
Of other follies which I can't rehearse,
Dear to himself and dearer to his purse.

No product he of Fortune's fickle dice,
The due result of Luxury and Vice,
Three generations have sufficed to bring
That narrow-chested, pale, enervate thing
Down from a *man*, — for, marvel as you will,
His huge great-grandsire fought on Bunker Hill!
Bore, without gloves, a musket through the war;
Came back adorned with many a noble scar;

Labored and prospered at a thriving rate,
And, dying, left his heir a snug estate, —
Which grew apace upon *his* busy hands,
Stocks, ships, and factories, tenements and lands,
All here at last, — the money and the race, —
The latter ending in that foolish face;
The former wandering, far beyond his aim,
Back to the rough plebeians whence it came!

Enough of censure; let my humble lays
Employ one moment in congenial praise.
Let other pens with pious ardor paint
The selfish virtues of the cloistered saint;
In lettered marble let the stranger read
Of him who, dying, did a worthy deed,
And left to charity the cherished store
Which, to his sorrow, he could hoard no more.
I venerate the nobler man who gives
His generous dollars while the donor lives;
Gives with a heart as liberal as the palms
That to the needy spread his honored alms;
Gives with a head whose yet unclouded light
To worthiest objects points the giver's sight;
Gives with a hand still potent to enforce
His well-aimed bounty, and direct its course; —
Such is the giver who must stand confest
In giving glorious, and supremely blest!
One such as this the captious world could find
In noble Perkins, angel of the blind;
One such as this in princely Lawrence shone,
Ere heavenly kindred claimed him for their own!

To me the boon may gracious Heaven assign, —
No cringing suppliant at Mammon's shrine,
Nor slave of Poverty, — with joy to share
The happy mean expressed in Agur's prayer: —
A house (my own) to keep me safe and warm,
A shade in sunshine, and a shield in storm;
A generous board, and fitting raiment, clear
Of debts and duns throughout the circling year;
Silver and gold, in moderate store, that I
May purchase joys that only these can buy;
Some gems of art, a cultured mind to please,
Books, pictures, statues, literary ease.
That "Time is Money" prudent Franklin shows
In rhyming couplets and sententious prose.
O, had he taught the world, in prose and rhyme,
The higher truth that Money may be Time!

And showed the people, in his pleasant ways,
The art of coining dollars into days!
Days for improvement, days for social life,
Days for your God, your children, and your wife;
Some days for pleasure, and an hour to spend
In genial converse with an honest friend.
Such days be mine! — and grant me, Heaven, but this,
With blooming health, man's highest earthly bliss, —
And I will read, without a sigh or frown,
The startling news that stocks are going down;
Hear without envy that a stranger hoards
Or spends more treasure than a mint affords;
See my next neighbor pluck a golden plum,
Calm and content within my cottage-home;
Take for myself what honest thrift may bring,
And for his kindness bless the Money-King!

EXCERPTS FROM OCCASIONAL POEMS.

EXCERPTS FROM OCCASIONAL POEMS.

EL DORADO.

LET others, dazzled by the shining ore,
Delve in the dirt to gather golden store.
Let others, patient of the menial toil
And daily suffering, seek the precious spoil;
No hero I, in such a cause to brave
Hunger and pain, the robber and the grave.
I'll work, instead, exempt from hate and harm,
The fruitful "placers" of my mountain-farm,
Where the bright ploughshare opens richest veins,
From whence shall issue countless golden grains,
Which in the fulness of the year shall come,
In bounteous sheaves, to bless my harvest-home!

But, haply, good may come of mining yet:
'T will help to pay the nation's foreign debt;
'T will further liberal arts; plate rings and pins,
Gild books and coaches, mirrors, signs, and sins;
'T will cheapen pens and pencils, and perchance
May give us honest dealing for Finance!
(That magic art, unknown to darker times
When fraud and falsehood were reputed crimes,
Whose curious laws with nice precision teach
How whole estates are made from parts of speech;
How lying rags for honest coin shall pass,
And foreign gold be paid in native brass!)
'T will save, perhaps, each deep-indebted State
From all temptation to "repudiate,"
Till Time restore our precious credit lost,
And hush the wail of Peter Plymley's ghost![16]

THE GOOD TIME COMING.

WHILE drones and dreaming optimists protest,
"The worst is well, and all is for the best";

And sturdy croakers chant the counter song,
That "man grows worse, and everything is wrong";
Truth, as of old, still loves a golden mean,
And shuns extremes to walk erect between!
The world improves; with slow, unequal pace,
"The Good Time 's coming" to our hapless race.
The general tide beneath the refluent surge
Rolls on, resistless, to its destined verge!
Unfriendly hills no longer interpose [17]
As stubborn walls to geographic foes,
Nor envious streams run only to divide
The hearts of brethren ranged on either side.
Promethean Science, with untiring eye
Searching the mysteries of the earth and sky;
And cunning Art, with strong and plastic hand
To work the marvels Science may command;
And broad-winged Commerce, swift to carry o'er
Earth's countless blessings to her farthest shore, —
These, and no German nor Genevan sage,
These are the great reformers of the age!

See Art, exultant in her stately car,
On Nature's Titans wage triumphant war!
While e'en the Lightnings by her wondrous skill
Are tamed for heralds of her sovereign will!
Old Ocean's breast a new invader feels,
And heaves in vain to clog her iron wheels;
In vain the Forests marshal all their force,
And Mountains rise to stay her onward course:
From out her path each bold opposer hurled,
She throws her girdle round a captive world!

THE POWER-PRESS.

Strange is the sound when first the notes begin
Where human voices blend with Vulcan's din;
The click, the clank, the clangor, and the sound
Of rattling rollers in their rapid round;
The whizzing belt, the sharp metallic jar,
Like clashing spears in fierce chivalric war;
The whispering birth of myriad flying leaves,
Gathered, anon, in countless motley sheaves,
Then scattered far, as on the wingéd wind,
The mortal nurture of th' immortal mind!

THE LIBRARY.

Here, e'en the sturdy democrat may find,
Nor scorn their rank, the nobles of the mind;

While kings may learn, nor blush at being shown,
How Learning's patents abrogate their own.
A goodly company and fair to see;
Royal plebeians; earls of low degree;
Beggars whose wealth enriches every clime;
Princes who scarce can boast a mental dime
Crowd here together, like the quaint array
Of jostling neighbors on a market day.
Homer and Milton, — can we call them blind? —
Of godlike sight, the vision of the mind;
Shakespeare, who calmly looked creation through,
"Exhausted worlds, and then imagined new";
Plato the sage, so thoughtful and serene,
He seems a prophet by his heavenly mien;
Shrewd Socrates, whose philosophic power
Xantippe proved in many a trying hour;
And Aristophanes, whose humor run
In vain endeavor to be-"cloud" the sun; [18]
Majestic Æschylus, whose glowing page
Holds half the grandeur of the Athenian stage;
Pindar, whose odes, replete with heavenly fire,
Proclaim the master of the Grecian lyre;
Anacreon, famed for many a luscious line
Devote to Venus and the god of wine.
I love vast libraries; yet there is a doubt
If one be better with them or without, —
Unless he use them wisely, and, indeed,
Knows the high art of what and how to read.
At Learning's fountain it is sweet to drink,
But 't is a nobler privilege to think;
And oft, from books apart, the thirsting mind
May make the nectar which it cannot find.
'T is well to borrow from the good and great;
'T is wise to learn; 't is godlike to create!

THE NEWS.

THE *News*, indeed! — pray do you call it news
When shallow noddles publish shallow views?
Pray, is it news that turnips should be bred
As large and hollow as the owner's head?
News, that a clerk should rob his master's hoard,
Whose meagre salary scarcely pays his board?
News, that two knaves, their spurious friendship o'er,
Should tell the truths which they concealed before?
News, that a maniac, weary of his life,
Should end his sorrows with a rope or knife?
News, that a wife should violate the vows

That bind her, loveless, to a tyrant spouse?
News, that a daughter cheats paternal rule,
And weds a scoundrel to escape a fool? —
The news, indeed! — Such matters are as old
As sin and folly, rust and must and mould!

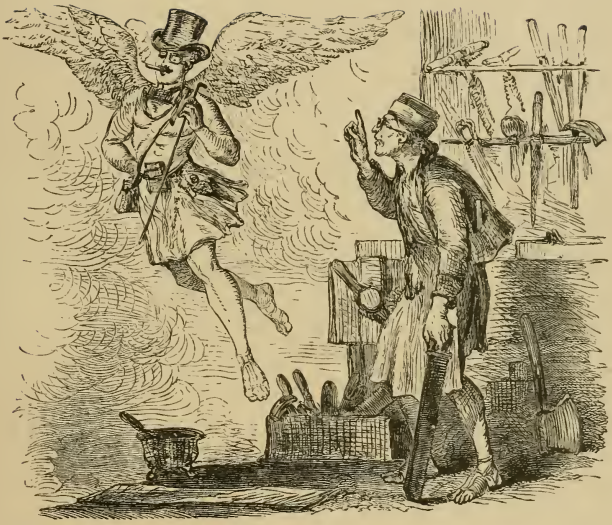
THE EDITOR'S SANCTUM.

SCENE, — a third story in a dismal court,
Where weary printers just at eight resort;
A dingy door that with a rattle shuts;
Heaps of "Exchanges," much adorned with "cuts";
Pens, paste, and paper on the table strewed;
Books, to be read when they have been reviewed;
Pamphlets and tracts so very dull indeed
That only they who wrote them e'er will read;
Nine letters, touching themes of every sort,
And one with money, — just a shilling short, —
Lie scattered round upon a common level.
PERSONS, — the Editor; enter, now, the Devil: —
"Please, sir, since this 'ere article was wrote,
There 's later news perhaps you 'd like to quote:
The Rebels storming with prodigious force,
'Sumter has fallen!'" "Set it up, of course."
"And, sir, that murder 's done — there 's only left
One larceny." "Pray don't omit the theft."
"And, sir, about the mob — the matter 's fat" —
"The mob? — that 's wrong — pray just distribute that."
Exit the imp of Faust, and enter now
A fierce subscriber with a scowling brow.
"Sir, curse your paper! — send the thing to —" Well,
The place he names were impolite to tell;
Enough to know the hero of the Press
Cries: "Thomas, change the gentleman's address!
We 'll send the paper, if the post will let it,
Where the subscriber will be sure to get it!"

Who would not be an Editor? — To write
The magic "we" of such enormous might;
To be so great beyond the common span
It takes the plural to express the man;
And yet, alas, it happens oftentimes
A unit serves to number all his dimes!
But don't despise him; there may chance to be
An earthquake lurking in his simple "we"!
In the close precincts of a dusty room
That owes few losses to the lazy broom,

There sits the man; you do not know his name,
Brown, Jones, or Johnson, — it is all the same, —
Scribbling away at what perchance may seem
An idler's musing, or a dreamer's dream;
His pen runs rambling, like a straying steed;
The "we" he writes seems very "wee" indeed;
But mark the change; behold the wondrous power
Wrought by the Press in one eventful hour;
To-night, 't is harmless as a maiden's rhymes;
To-morrow, thunder in the *London Times!*
The ministry dissolves that held for years;
Her Grace, the Duchess, is dissolved in tears;
The Rothschilds quail; the church, the army, quakes;
The very kingdom to its centre shakes;
The Corn Laws fall; the price of bread comes down, —
Thanks to the "we" of Johnson, Jones, or Brown!

TRAVESTIES.



TRAVESTIES.

ICARUS.

I.

ALL modern themes of poesy are spun so very fine,
That now the most amusing muse, *e gratia*, such as mine,
Is often forced to cut the thread that strings our recent rhymes,
And try the stronger staple of the good old classic times.

II.

There lived and flourished long ago, in famous Athens town,
One *Dædalus*, a carpenter of genius and renown;
('T was he who with an *auger* taught mechanics how to *bore*,
An art which the philosophers monopolized before.)

III.

His only son was *Icarus*, a most precocious lad,
The pride of Mrs. Dædalus, the image of his dad;
And while he yet was in his teens such progress he had made,
He 'd got above his father's size, and much above his trade.

IV.

Now *Dædalus*, the carpenter, had made a pair of wings,
Contrived of wood and feathers and a cunning set of springs,
By means of which the wearer could ascend to any height,
And sail about among the clouds as easy as a kite!

V.

"O father," said young *Icarus*, "how I should like to fly!
And go like you where all is blue along the upper sky;
How very charming it would be above the moon to climb,
And scamper through the Zodiac, and have a high old time!

VI.

"O would n't it be jolly, though, — to stop at all the inns;
To take a luncheon at 'The Crab,' and tipple at 'The Twins';
And, just for fun and fancy, while careering through the air,
To kiss the *Virgin*, tease the *Ram*, and bait the biggest *Bear*?

VII.

"O father, please to let me go!" was still the urchin's cry;
"I 'll be extremely careful, sir, and won't go *very* high;
O if this little pleasure-trip you only will allow,
I promise to be back again in time to fetch the cow!"

VIII.

"You 're rather young," said Dædalus, "to tempt the upper air;
But take the wings, and mind your eye with very special care;
And keep at least a thousand miles below the nearest star;
Young lads, when out upon a lark, are apt to go too far!"

IX.

He took the wings — that foolish boy — without the least dismay;
His father stuck 'em on with wax, and so he soared away;
Up, up he rises, like a bird, and not a moment stops
Until he 's fairly out of sight beyond the mountain-tops!

X.

And still he flies — away — away; it seems the merest fun;
No marvel he is getting bold, and aiming at the sun;
No marvel he forgets his sire; it is n't very odd
That one so far above the earth should think himself a god!

XI.

Already, in his silly pride, he 's gone too far aloft;
The heat begins to scorch his wings; the wax is waxing soft;
Down — down he goes! — Alas! — next day poor Icarus was found
Afloat upon the Ægean Sea, extremely damp and drowned!

L'ENVOI.

The moral of this mournful tale is plain enough to all: —
Don't get above your proper sphere, or you may chance to fall;
Remember, too, that borrowed plumes are most uncertain things;
And never try to scale the sky with other people's wings!

PYRAMUS AND THISBE.

THIS tragical tale, which, they say,
is a true one,
Is old, but the manner is wholly a
new one.
One *Ovid*, a writer of some reputation,
Has told it before in a tedious narration;
In a style, to be sure, of remarkable fulness,
But which nobody reads on account of its dulness.

Young Peter Pyramus, *I* call him
Peter,
Not for the sake of the rhyme or
metre,
But merely to make the name completer, —
For Peter lived in the olden times,
And in one of the worst of Pagan
climes
That flourish now in classical fame,
Long before
Either noble or boor
Had such a thing as a *Christian*
name, —
Young Peter then was a nice young
beau
As any young lady would wish to
know;
In years, I ween,
He was rather green,
That is to say, he was just eighteen, —
A trifle too short, and a shaving
too lean,
But "a nice young man" as ever
was seen,
And fit to dance with a May-day
queen!

Now Peter loved a beautiful girl
As ever ensnared the heart of an
earl
In the magical trap of an auburn
curl, —
A little Miss Thisbe who lived next
door,
(They slept in fact on the very
same floor,
With a wall between them, and
nothing more,
Those double dwellings were common of yore,)
And they loved each other, the
legends say,
In that very beautiful, bountiful
way
That every young maid,
And every young blade,
Are wont to do before they grow
staid,
And learn to love by the laws of
trade.
But alack-a-day for the girl and
boy,
A little impediment checked their
joy,
And gave them, awhile, the deepest annoy.
For some good reason, which history cloaks,
The match did n't happen to please
the old folks!

So Thisbe's father and Peter's
mother
Began the young couple to worry
and bother,
And tried their innocent passions
to smother
By keeping the lovers from seeing
each other!
But whoever heard
Of a marriage deterred,
Or even deferred,
By any contrivance so very absurd
As scolding the boy, and caging
his bird?

Now Peter, who was n't discouraged at all
By obstacles such as the timid appall,

Contrived to discover a hole in the wall,
Which was n't so thick
But removing a brick
Made a passage, — though rather provokingly small.
Through this little chink the lover could greet her,
And secrecy made their courting the sweeter,
While Peter kissed Thisbe, and Thisbe kissed Peter, —
For kisses, like folks with diminutive souls,
Will manage to creep through the smallest of holes!

'T was here that the lovers, intent upon love,
Laid a nice little plot
To meet at a spot
Near a mulberry-tree in a neighboring grove;
For the plan was all laid
By the youth and the maid,
(Whose hearts, it would seem, were uncommonly bold ones,)
To run off and get married in spite of the old ones.

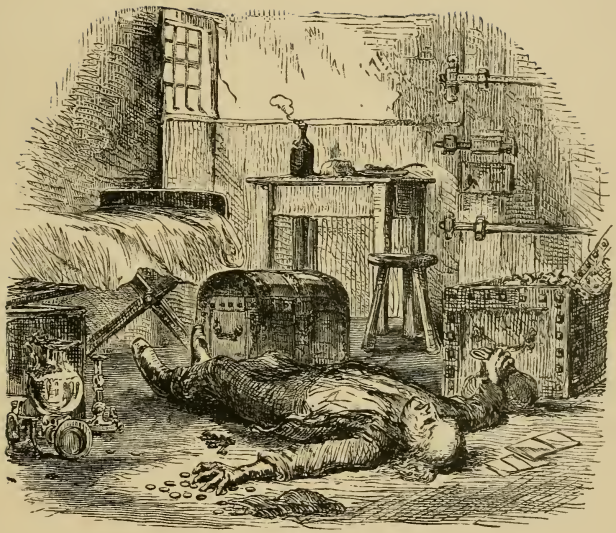
In the shadows of evening, as still as a mouse,
The beautiful maiden slipt out of the house,
The mulberry-tree impatient to find,
While Peter, the vigilant matrons to blind,
Strolled leisurely out some minutes behind.
While waiting alone by the trysting tree,
A terrible lion
As e'er you set eye on
Came roaring along quite horrid to see,
And caused the young maiden in terror to flee,
(A lion 's a creature whose regular trade is
Blood, — and "a terrible thing among ladies,")
And losing her veil as she ran from the wood,
The monster bedabbled it over with blood.

Now Peter arriving, and seeing the veil
All covered o'er
And reeking with gore,
Turned all of a sudden exceedingly pale,
And sat himself down to weep and to wail, —
For, soon as he saw the garment, poor Peter
Made up in his mind, in very short metre,
That Thisbe was dead, and the lion had eat her!
So breathing a prayer,
He determined to share
The fate of his darling, "the loved and the lost,"
And fell on his dagger, and gave up the ghost!

Now Thisbe returning, and viewing her beau,
Lying dead by the veil (which she happened to know),
She guessed, in a moment, the cause of his erring,
And seizing the knife
Which had taken his life,
In less than a jiffy was dead as a herring!

MORAL.

Young gentlemen! pray recollect, if you please,
Not to make assignations near mulberry-trees;



Should your mistress be missing, it shows a weak head
To be stabbing yourself till you know she is dead.

Young ladies! you should n't go strolling about
When your anxious mammas don't know you are out,
And remember that accidents often befall
From kissing young fellows through holes in the wall.

THE CHOICE OF KING MIDAS.

King Midas, prince of Phrygia, several thousand years ago,
Was a very worthy monarch, as the classic annals show;
You may read 'em at your leisure, when you have a mind to doze,
In the finest Latin verses, or in choice Hellenic prose.

Now this notable old monarch, King of Phrygia, as aforesaid
(Of whose royal state and character there might be vastly more said),
Though he occupied a palace, kept a very open door,
And had still a ready welcome for the stranger and the poor.

Now it chanced that old Silenus, who, it seems, had lost his way,
Following Bacchus through the forest, in the pleasant month of May
Which was n't very singular, for at the present day
The followers of Bacchus very often go astray),
Came at last to good King Midas, who received him in his court,
Gave him comfortable lodgings, and—to cut the matter short—
With as much consideration treated weary old Silenus,
As if the entertainment were for Mercury or Venus.

Now when Bacchus heard the story, he proceeded to the king,
And says he: "By old Silenus you have done the handsome thing;
He 's my much-respected tutor, who has taught me how to read,
And I 'm sure your royal kindness should receive its proper meed;

"So I grant you full permission to select your own reward.
Choose a gift to suit your fancy,—something worthy of a lord!"
"Bully Bacche!" cried the monarch, "if I do not make too bold,
Let whatever I may handle be transmuted into gold!"

Midas, sitting down to dinner, sees the answer to his wish,
For the turbot on the platter turns into a golden fish!
And the bread between his fingers is no longer wheaten bread,
But the slice he tries to swallow is a wedge of gold instead!

And the roast he takes for mutton fills his mouth with golden meat,
Very tempting to the vision, but extremely hard to eat;
And the liquor in his goblet, very rare, select, and old,
Down the monarch's thirsty throttle runs a stream of liquid gold!

Quite disgusted with his dining, he betakes him to his bed;
But, alas! the golden pillow does n't rest his weary head
Nor does all the gold around him soothe the monarch's tender skin;
Golden sheets, to sleepy mortals, might as well be sheets of tin.

Now poor Midas, straight repenting of his rash and foolish choice,
Went to Bacchus, and assured him, in a very plaintive voice,
That his golden gift was working in a manner most unpleasant, —
And the god, in sheer compassion, took away the fatal present.

MORAL.

By this mythologic story we are very plainly told,
That, though gold may have its uses, there are better things than gold;
That a man may sell his freedom to procure the shining pelf;
And that Avarice, though it prosper, still contrives to cheat itself.

PHAËTHON;

OR, THE AMATEUR COACHMAN.

DAN PHAËTHON — so the histories run —
Was a jolly young chap, and a son of the Sun, —
Or rather of Phœbus; but as to his mother,
Genealogists make a deuce of a pother,
Some going for one, and some for another.
For myself, I must say, as a careful explorer,
This roaring young blade was the son of Aurora!

Now old Father Phœbus, ere railways begun
To elevate funds and depreciate fun,
Drove a very fast coach by the name of "The Sun";
Running, they say,
Trips every day
(On Sundays and all, in a heathenish way),
All lighted up with a famous array
Of lanterns that shone with a brilliant display,
And dashing along like a gentleman's "shay,"
With never a fare, and nothing to pay!
Now Phaëthon begged of his doting old father
To grant him a favor, and this the rather,
Since some one had hinted, the youth to annoy,
That he was n't by any means Phœbus's boy!
Intending, the rascally son of a gun,
To darken the brow of the son of the Sun!
"By the terrible Styx!" said the angry sire,
While his eyes flashed volumes of fury and fire,
"To prove your reviler an infamous liar,
I swear I will grant you whate'er you desire!"
"Then by my head,"
The youngster said,

"I'll mount the coach when the horses are fed! —
For there's nothing I'd choose, as I'm alive,
Like a seat on the box, and a dashing drive!"
"Nay, Phaëthon, don't, —
I beg you won't, —
Just stop a moment and think upon't!"
"You're quite too young," continued the sage,
"To tend a coach at your tender age!
Besides, you see,
'T will really be
Your first appearance on any stage!
Desist, my child,
The cattle are wild,
And when their mettle is thoroughly 'riled,'
Depend upon't the coach'll be 'spiled,' —
They're not the fellows to draw it mild!
Desist, I say,
You'll rue the day, —
So mind, and don't be foolish, Pha!"
But the youth was proud,
And swore aloud,
'T was just the thing to astonish the crowd, —
He'd have the horses and would n't be cowed!
In vain the boy was cautioned at large,
He called for the chargers, unheeding the charge,
And vowed that any young fellow of force
Could manage a dozen coursers, of course!
Now Phœbus felt exceedingly sorry
He had given his word in such a hurry,
But having sworn by the Styx, no doubt
He was in for it now, and could n't back out.
So calling Phaëthon up in a trice,
He gave the youth a bit of advice: —
"*Parce stimulis, utere loris!*"
(A 'stage direction,' of which the core is,
Don't use the whip, — they're ticklish things, —
But, whatever you do, hold on to the strings!)
"Remember the rule of the Jehu-tribe is,
Medio tutissimus ibis,
As the Judge remarked to a rowdy Scotchman,
Who was going to quod between two watchmen!
So mind your eye, and spare your goad,
Be shy of the stones, and keep in the road!"

Now Phaëthon, perched in the coachman's place,
Drove off the steeds at a furious pace,
Fast as coursers running a race,
Or bounding along in a steeple-chase!
Of whip and shout there was no lack,
"Crack — whack —
Whack — crack,"
Resounded along the horses' back!
Frightened beneath the stinging lash,
Cutting their flanks in many a gash,
On, on they sped as swift as a flash,
Through thick and thin away they dash,
(Such rapid driving is always rash!)

When all at once, with a dreadful crash,
The whole "establishment" went to smash!
And Phaëthon, he,
As all agree,
Off the coach was suddenly hurled,
Into a puddle, and out of the world!

MORAL.

Don't rashly take to dangerous courses, —
Nor set it down in your table of forces,
That any one man equals any four horses!
Don't swear by the Styx! —
It 's one of Old Nick's
Diabolical tricks
To get people into a regular "fix,"
And hold 'em there as fast as bricks!

POLYPHEMUS AND ULYSSES.

A VERY remarkable history this is
Of one Polyphemus and Captain Ulysses:
The latter a hero, accomplished and bold,
The former a knave, and a fright to behold, —
A horrid big giant who lived in a den,
And dined every day on a couple of men,
Ate a woman for breakfast, and (dreadful to see!)
Had a nice little baby served up with his tea;
Indeed, if there 's truth in the sprightly narration
Of Homer, a poet of some reputation,
Or Virgil, a writer but little inferior,
And in some things, perhaps, the other's superior, —
Polyphemus was truly a terrible creature,
In manners and morals, in form and in feature;
For law and religion he cared not a copper,
And, in short, led a life that was very improper: —
What made him a very remarkable guy,
Like the late Mr. Thompson, he 'd only one eye;
But that was a whopper, — a terrible one, —
"As large" (Virgil says) "as the disk of the sun;"
A brilliant, but rather extravagant figure,
Which means, I suppose, that his eye was much bigger
Than yours, — or even the orb of your sly
Old bachelor-friend who 's "a wife in his eye."
Ulysses, the hero I mentioned before,
Was shipwrecked, one day, on the pestilent shore
Where the Cyclops resided, along with their chief,
Polyphemus, the terrible man-eating thief,
Whose manners they copied, and laws they obeyed,
While driving their horrible cannibal trade.

With many expressions of civil regret
That Ulysses had got so unpleasantly wet,
With many expressions of pleasure profound

That all had escaped being thoroughly drowned,
The rascal declared he was "fond of the brave,"
And invited the strangers all home to his cave.

Here the cannibal king, with as little remorse
As an omnibus feels for the death of a horse,
Seized, crushed, and devoured a brace of the Greeks,
As a Welshman would swallow a couple of leeks,
Or a Frenchman, supplied with his usual prog,
Would punish the hams of a favorite frog.
Dashed and smashed against the stones,
He broke their bodies and cracked their bones,
Minding no more their moans and groans
Than the grinder heeds his organ's tones!
With purple gore the pavement swims,
While the giant crushes their crackling limbs,
And poor Ulysses trembles with fright
At the horrid sound, and the horrid sight, —
Trembles lest the monster grim
Should make his "nuts and raisins" of him!
And, really, since
The man was a Prince,
It's not very odd that his Highness should wince
(Especially after such very strong hints),
At the cannibal's manner, as rather more free
Than his Highness at court was accustomed to see!

But the crafty Greek, to the tyrant's hurt
(Though he didn't deserve so fine a dessert),
Took a dozen of wine from his leather trunk,
And plied the giant until he was drunk! —
Drunker than any one you or *I* know,
Who buys his "Rhenish" with ready rhino, —
Exceedingly drunk, — *sepultus vino!*

Gazing a moment upon the sleeper,
Ulysses cried: "Let's spoil his peeper! —
'T will put him, my boys, in a pretty trim,
If we can manage to douse his glim!"
So, taking a spar that was lying in sight,
They poked it into his "forward light,"
And gouged away with furious spite,
Ramming and jamming with all their might!

In vain the giant began to roar,
And even swore
That he never before
Had met, in his life, such a terrible bore.
They only plied the auger the more,
And mocked his grief with a bantering cry,
"Don't babble of pain, — *it's all in your eye!*"
Until, alas for the wretched Cyclops!
He gives a groan, and out his eye pops!

Leaving the knave, one need n't be told,
As blind as a puppy of three days old.

The rest of the tale I can't tell now, —
Except that Ulysses got out of the row,
With the rest of his crew, — it 's no matter how;
While old Polyphemus, until he was dead, —
Which was n't till many years after, 't is said, —
Had a grief in his heart and a hole in his head!

MORAL.

Don't use strong drink, — pray let me advise, —
It 's bad for the stomach, and ruins the eyes;
Don't impose upon sailors with land-lubber tricks,
Or you 'll catch it some day like a thousand of bricks!

ORPHEUS AND EURYDICE.

Sir Orpheus, whom the poets have sung
In every metre and every tongue
Was, you may remember, a famous musician, —
At least for a youth in his pagan condition, —
For historians tell he played on his shell
From morning till night, so remarkably well
That his music created a regular spell
On trees and stones in forest and dell!
What sort of an instrument his could be
Is really more than is known to me, —
For none of the books have told, d' ye see!
It 's very certain those heathen "swells"
Knew nothing at all of oyster-shells,
And it 's clear Sir Orpheus never could own a
Shell like those they make in Cremona;
But whatever it was, to "move the stones"
It must have shelled out some powerful tones,
And entitled the player to rank in my rhyme
As the very *Vieuxtemps* of the very old time!

But alas for the joys of this mutable life!
Sir Orpheus lost his beautiful wife, —
Eurydice, — who vanished one day
From Earth, in a very unpleasant way!
It chanced, as near as I can determine,
Through one of those vertebrated vermin
That lie in the grass so prettily curled,
Waiting to "snake" you out of the world!
And the poets tell she went to — well —
A place where Greeks and Romans dwell
After they burst their mortal shell;
A region that in the deepest shade is,
And known by the classical name of Hades, —

A different place from the terrible furnace
Of Tartarus, down below Avernus.

Now, having a heart uncommonly stout,
Sir Orpheus did n't go whining about,
Nor marry another, as *you* would, no doubt,
But made up his mind to fiddle her out!
But near the gate he had to wait,
For there in state old Cerberus sate.
A three-headed dog, as cruel as Fate,
Guarding the entrance early and late;
A beast so sagacious and very voracious,
So uncommonly sharp and extremely rapacious,
That it really may be doubted whether
He 'd have his match, should a common tether
Unite three aldermen's heads together!

But Orpheus, not in the least afraid,
Tuned up his shell, and quickly essayed
What could be done with a serenade,
In short, so charming an air he played,
He quite succeeded in overreaching
The cunning cur, by musical teaching,
And put him to sleep as fast as preaching!

And now our musical champion, Orpheus,
Having given the janitor over to Morpheus,
Went groping around among the ladies
Who throng the dismal halls of Hades,
Calling aloud
To the shady crowd,
In a voice as shrill as a martial fife,
"O, tell me where in hell is my wife!"
(A natural question, 't is very plain,
Although it may sound a little profane.)
"Eurydice! *Eu-ryd-i-ce!*"
He cried as loud as loud could be,—
(A singular sound, and funny withal,
In a place where nobody *rides* at all!)
"Eurydice! — Eurydice!
O, come, my dear, along with me!"
And then he played so remarkably fine
That it really might be called divine, —
For who can show,
On earth or below,
Such wonderful feats in the musical line?

E'en Tantalus ceased from trying to sip
The cup that flies from his arid lip;
Ixion, too, the magic could feel,
And, for a moment, blocked his wheel;
Poor Sisyphus, doomed to tumble and toss
The notable stone that gathers no moss,
Let go his burden, and turned to hear
The charming sounds that ravished his ear;
And even the Furies, — those terrible shrews
Whom no one before could ever amuse, —

Those strong-bodied ladies with strong-minded views
Whom even the Devil would doubtless refuse,
Were his Majesty only permitted to choose, —
Each felt for a moment her nature desert her,
And wept like a girl o'er the "Sorrows of Werther."

And still Sir Orpheus chanted his song,
Sweet and clear and strong and long,
"Eurydice! — Eurydice!"
He cried as loud as loud could be;
And Echo, taking up the word,
Kept it up till the lady heard,
And came with joy to meet her lord.
And he led her along the infernal route,
Until he had got her almost out,
When, suddenly turning his head about
(To take a peep at his wife, no doubt),
He gave a groan,
For the lady was gone,
And had left him standing there all alone!
For by an oath the gods had bound
Sir Orpheus not to look around
Till he was clear of the sacred ground,
If he 'd have Eurydice safe and sound;
For the moment he did an act so rash
His wife would vanish as quick as a flash!

MORAL.

Young women! beware, for goodness' sake,
Of every sort of "sarpent snake";
Remember the rogue is apt to deceive,
And played the deuce with Grandmother Eve!

Young men! it 's a critical thing to go
Exactly right with a lady in tow;
But when you are in the proper track,
Just go ahead, and never look back!

JUPITER AND DANAË:

OR, HOW TO WIN A WOMAN.

Imperial Jove, who, with wonderful art,
Was one of those suitors that always prevail,
Once made an assault on so flinty a heart
That he feared for a while he was destined to fail.

A beautiful maiden, Miss Danaë by name,
The Olympian lover endeavored to win;
But she peeped from the casement whenever he came,
Exclaiming, "You 're handsome, but cannot come in!"

With sweet adulation he tickled her ear;
But still at her window she quietly sat,
And said, though his speeches were pleasant to hear,
She 'd always been used to such homage as that!

Then he spoke, in a fervid and rapturous strain,
Of a bosom consuming with burning desire;
But his eloquent pleading was wholly in vain, —
She thought it imprudent to meddle with fire!

Then he begged her in mercy to pity his case,
And spoke of his dreadfully painful condition;
But the lady replied, with a sorrowful face,
She was only a maiden, and not a physician!

In vain with these cunning conventional snares,
To win her the gallant Lothario strove;
In spite of his smiles, and his tears, and his prayers,
She could n't, she would n't, be courted by Jove!

At last he contrived, — so the story is told, —
By some means or other, one evening, to pour
Plump into her apron a shower of gold,
Which opened her heart, — and unbolted her door!

MORAL.

Hence suitors may learn that in matters of love
'T is idle in manners or merit to trust;
The only sure way is to imitate Jove, —
Just open your purse, and come down with the dust.

VENUS AND VULCAN:

OR, THE MYSTERY EXPLAINED.

When the peerless Aphrodite
First appeared among her kin,
What a flutter of excitement
All the goddesses were in!

How the gods, in deep amazement,
Bowed before the Queen of Beauty,
And in loyal adoration
Proffered each his humble duty!

Phœbus, first, to greet her coming,
Met her with a grand oration;
Mars, who ne'er before had trembled,
Showed the plainest trepidation!

Hermes fairly lost his cunning,
Gazing at the new Elysian;
Plutus quite forgot his money
In the rapture of his vision!

Even Jove was deeply smitten
(So the Grecian poets tell us),
And, as might have been expected,
Juno was extremely jealous!

Staid Minerva thought her silly;
Chaste Diana called her vain;
But not one of all the ladies
Dared to say that she was "plain"!

Surely such a throng of lovers
Never mortal yet could boast;
Everywhere throughout Olympus
"Charming Venus!" was the toast!

Even Vulcan, lame and ugly,
Paid the dame his awkward court;

But the goddess, in derision,
  Turned his passion into sport;

Laughed aloud at all his pleading,
  Bade him wash his visage sooty,
And go wooing with the Harpies,
  What had *he* to do with Beauty?

Well — how fared it with the goddess?
  Sure, the haughty queen of love,
Choosing one to suit her fancy,
  Married Phœbus, Mars, or Jove?

No! — at last — as often happens
  To coquettes of lower station —
Venus found herself neglected,
  With a damaged reputation;

And esteeming any husband
  More desirable than none,
She was glad to marry Vulcan
  As the best that could be done!

L'ENVOI.

Hence you learn the real reason,
  Which your wonder oft arouses,
Why so many handsome women
  Have such very ugly spouses!

RICHARD OF GLOSTER.

A TRAVESTY.

PERHAPS, my dear boy, you may never have heard
Of that wicked old monarch, King Richard the Third, —
Whose actions were often extremely absurd;
  And who led such a sad life,
  Such a wanton and mad life;
Indeed, I may say, such a wretchedly bad life,
I suppose I am perfectly safe in declaring,
There was ne'er such a monster of infamous daring.
In all sorts of crime he was wholly unsparing;
In pride and ambition was quite beyond bearing;
And had a bad habit of cursing and swearing.
I must own, my dear boy, I have more than suspected
The King's education was rather neglected;
And that at *your* school with any two "Dicks"
Whom your excellent teacher diurnally pricks
In his neat little tables, in order to fix
Each pupil's progression with numeral nicks,
Master Richard Y. Gloster would often have heard
His standing recorded as "Richard — *the third!*"
But whatever of learning his Majesty had,
'T is clear the King's English was shockingly bad.
  At the slightest pretence
  Of disloyal offence,
His anger exceeded all reason or sense;
And, having no need to foster or nurse it, he
Would open his wrath, then, as if to disperse it, he
Would scatter his curses like College degrees;
  And, quite at his ease,
  Conferred his "*d-d*'s,"
As plenty and cheap as a young University!

And yet Richard's tongue was remarkable smooth,
Could utter a lie quite as easy as truth
(Another bad habit he got in his youth),
And had, on occasion, a powerful battery
Of plausible phrases and eloquent flattery,
Which gave him, my boy, in that barbarous day
(Things are different now, I am happy to say),
Over feminine hearts a most perilous sway.
The women, in spite of an odious hump
Which he wore on his back, all thought him a trump;
And just when he 'd played them the scurviest trick,
They 'd swear in their hearts that this crooked old stick, —
This treacherous, dangerous, dissolute Dick,
For honor and virtue beat Cato all hollow;
And in figure and face was another Apollo!

He murdered their brothers,
And fathers and mothers;
And, worse than all that, he slaughtered by dozens
His own royal uncles and nephews and cousins;
And then, in the cunningest sort of orations,
In smooth conversations,
And flattering ovations,
Made love to the principal female relations!
'T was very improper, my boy, you must know,
For the son of a King to behave himself so;
And you 'll scarcely believe what the chronicles show
Of his wonderful wooings,
And infamous doings;
But here 's an exploit that he certainly *did* do, —
Killed his own cousin Ned,
As he slept in his bed,
And married, next day, the disconsolate widow!

I don't understand how such ogres arise,
But beginning, perhaps, with things little in size,
Such as torturing beetles and blue-bottle-flies,
Or scattering snuff in a poodle-dog's eyes, —
King Richard had grown so wantonly cruel,
He minded a murder no more than a duel;
He 'd indulge, on the slightest pretence or occasion,
In his favorite amusement of Decapitation,
Until "Off with his head!"
It is credibly said,
From his Majesty's mouth came as easy and pat
As from an old constable, "Off with his hat!"
One really shivers,
And fairly quivers,
To think of the treatment of Grey and Rivers
And Hastings and Vaughn and other good livers,
All suddenly sent, at the tap of a drum,
From the Kingdom of England to Kingdom-Come!
Of Buckingham doomed to a tragical end
For being the tyrant's particular friend;

Of Clarence who died, it is mournful to think,
Of wine that he was n't permitted to drink;
And the beautiful babies of royal blood,
Two little White Roses both nipt in the bud;
And silly Queen Anne, — what sorrow it cost her
(And served her right!) for daring to foster
The impudent suit of this Richard of Gloster,
Who, instead of conferring a royal gratuity,
A dower, or even a decent *Anne*uity,
Just gave her a portion of — something or other
That made her as quiet as Pharaoh's mother!

Ah Richard! you 're going it quite too fast;
Your doom is slow, but it 's coming at last;
Your bloody crown
Will topple down,
And you 'll be done uncommonly brown!
Your foes are thick,
My daring Dick,
And Richmond, a prince, and a regular brick,
Is after you now with a very sharp stick!

On Bosworth field the armies to-night
Are pitching their tents in each other's sight;
And to-morrow! to-morrow! they 're going to fight!
And now King Richard has gone to bed;
But e'en in his sleep
He cannot keep
The past or the future out of his head.
In his deep remorse
Each mangled corse
Of all he had slain, — or, what was worse,
Their ghosts, — came up in terrible force,
And greeted his ear with unpleasant discourse,
Until, with a scream,
He woke from his dream,
And shouted aloud for "another horse!"

Perhaps you may think, my little dear,
King Richard's request was rather queer;
But I 'll presently make it exceedingly clear: —
THE ROYAL SLEEPER WAS OVERFED!
I mean to say that, against his habit,
He 'd eaten Welsh-rabbit
With very bad whiskey on going to bed.
I 've had the Night-Mare with horrible force,
And much prefer a different horse!

But see! the murky night is gone!
The Morn is up, and the Fight is on!
The Knights are engaging, the warfare is waging,
On the right, on the left, the battle is raging;
King Richard is down!
Will he save his crown?
There 's a crack in it now! — he 's beginning to bleed!
Aha! King Richard has lost his steed!
(At a moment like this 't is a terrible need!)

He shouts aloud with thundering force,
And offers a *very* high price for a horse,
But it 's all in vain, — the battle is done, —
The day is lost! — and the day is won! —
And Richmond is King! and Richard's a corse!

MORAL.

Remember, my boy, that moral enormities
Are apt to attend corporeal deformities.
Whatever you have, or whatever you lack,
Beware of getting a crook in your back;
And, while you 're about it, I 'd very much rather
You 'd grow tall and superb, i. e. copy your father!

Don't learn to be cruel, pray let me advise,
By torturing beetles and blue-bottle-flies,
Or scattering snuff in a poodle-dog's eyes.

If you ever should marry, remember to wed
A handsome, plump, modest, sweet-spoken, well-bred,
And sensible maiden of twenty, — instead
Of a widow whose husband is recently dead!
If you 'd shun in your naps those horrible *Incubi*,
Beware what you eat, and be careful what drink you buy;
Or else you may see, in your sleep's perturbations,
Some old and uncommonly ugly relations,
Who 'll be very apt to disturb your nutations
By unpleasant allusions and rude observations!

OTHELLO, THE MOOR.

ROMANCES of late are so wretchedly poor,
Here goes for the old one: — Othello, the Moor;
A warrior of note, and by no means a boor,
Though the skin on his face
Was as black as the ace
Of spades; or (a simile nearer the case)
Say, black as the Deuce; or black as a brace
Of very black cats in a very dark place!
That 's the German idea;
But how he *could* be a
Regular negro don't seem very clear;
For Horace, you know,
A great while ago,
Put a sentiment forth which we all must agree to:
"*Hic niger est; hunc tu, Romane, caveto!*"
(A nigger 's a rascal that one ought to see to.)
I rather, in sooth,
Think it nearer the truth
To take the opinion of young Mr. Booth,
Who makes *his* Othello
A grim-looking fellow
Of a color compounded of lamp-black and yellow.

Now Captain Othello, a true son of Mars,
The foe being vanquished, returned from the wars,
All covered with ribbons, and garters, and stars,
Not to mention a score of magnificent scars;
And calling, one day,
In a neighborly way,
On Signor Brabantio, — one of the men
Who figured in Venice as Senator then, —
Was invited to tell
Of all that befell
Himself and his friends while campaigning so well,
From the time of his boyhood till now he was grown
The greatest of Captains that Venice had known.
As a neighbor should do,
He ran it quite through,
(I would n't be bail it was all of it true,)
Recounting, with ardor, such trophies and glories,
Among Ottoman rebels and Cyprian tories,
Not omitting a parcel of cock-and-bull stories, —
That he quite won the heart of the Senator's daughter,
Who, like most of the sex, had a passion for slaughter;
And was wondrously bold
In battles, — as told
By brilliant romancers, who picture in gold
What, in its own hue, you 'd be shocked to behold.

Now Captain Othello, who never had known a
Young lady so lovely as "Fair Desdemona,"
Not even his patroness, Madam Bellona, —
Was delighted, one day,
At hearing her say,
Of all men in the world he 'd the charmingest way
Of talking to women; and if any one *should*,
(Tho' she did n't imagine that any one would, —
For where, to be sure, was another who *could?*)
But *if* — and *suppose* — a lover came to her,
And told her *his* story, 't would certainly woo her.
With so lucid a hint,
The dickens were in 't,
If he could n't have read her as easy as print;
And thus came of course, — but as to the rest, —
The billing and cooing I leave to be guessed, —
And how, when their passion was fairly confessed,
They sent for a parson to render them "blest," —
Although it was done, I am sorry to say,
In what Mrs. P. — had it happened to-day —
Would be likely to call a *clandestiny* way!
I cannot recount
One half the amount
Of curses that burst from his cardiac fount
When Signor Brabantio learned that the Moor
Had married his daughter; "How *dared* he to woo her?
The sooty-skinned knave, — thus to blight and undo her?
With what villanous potions the scoundrelly sinner
Must have poisoned her senses in order to win her!"

And more of the same, —
But my language is lame,
E'en a fishwoman's tongue were decidedly tame
A tithe of the epithets even to name,
Compounded of scorn and derision and hate,
Which Signor Brabantio poured on the pate
Of the beautiful girl's nigritudinous mate!
I cannot delay
To speak of the way
The matter was settled; suffice it to say
'T was exactly the same as you see in a play,
Where the lady persuades her affectionate sire
That the fault was her own, — which softens his ire,
And, though for a season extremely annoyed,
At last he approves — what he cannot avoid!

Philosophers tell us
A mind like Othello's —
Strong, manly, and brave — is n't apt to be jealous;
But now, you must know,
The Moor had a foe,
Iago, by name, who concealed with a show
Of honest behavior the wickedest heart
That Satan e'er filled with his treacherous art,
And who, as a *friend*,
Was accustomed to lend
His gifts to the most diabolical end,
To wit, the destruction of Captain Othello,
Desdemona, his wife, and an excellent fellow,
One Cassio, a soldier, — too apt to get mellow, —
But as honest a man as ever broke bread,
A bottle of wine, or an Ottoman head.

'T is a very long story,
And would certainly bore ye,
Being not very brilliant with grandeur or glory,
How the wicked Iago contrived to abuse
The gallant Othello respecting his views
Of his fair lady's honor;
Reflecting upon her
In damnable hints, and by fragments of news
About palming and presents, himself had invented,
Until the poor husband was fairly demented,
And railed at his wife, like a cowardly varlet,
And gave her an epithet, — rhyming with scarlet,
And prated of Cassio with virulent spleen,
And called for a handkerchief some one had seen,
And wanted to know what the deuce it could mean?
And — to state the case honestly — really acted
In the manner that women call "raving-distracted!"

It is sad to record
How her lunatic lord
Spurned all explanation the dame could afford,
And still kept repeating the odious word,

So false, and so foul to a virtuous ear,
That I could n't be tempted to mention it here.
'T is sadder to tell
Of the crime that befell,
When, moved, it would seem, by the demons of hell,
He seized a knife,
And, kissing his wife,
Extinguished the light of her innocent life;
And how, also, before the poor body was cool,
He found he had acted as villany's tool,
And died exclaiming, "O fool! *fool!* FOOL!"

MORAL.

Young ladies! — beware of hasty connections;
And don't marry suitors with swarthy complexions;
For though they may chance to be capital fellows,
Depend upon it, they 're apt to be jealous!

Young gentlemen! pray recollect, if you can,
To give a wide berth to a meddlesome man;
And horsewhip the knave who would poison your life
By breeding distrust between you and your wife!

SONNETS.

SONNETS.

THREE LOVES.

I HAVE known various loves of women. One
Gave all her soul (she said), but kept intact
Her marble lips, and ever seemed to shun
Love's blandishments, as if his lightest act
Were fatal to his life. Another gave
All luxury of love that woman's art
Could lend in aid of Beauty's kisses — save
What she, alas! had not — a loving heart.
Poor, dear, dead flowers! One with no root in earth;
And one no breath of Heaven's sustaining air;
No marvel briefly they survived their birth;
And then my true-love came (O wondrous fair
Beyond the twain!) whose soul and sense unite
In perfect bloom for Love's supreme delight.

MY QUEEN.

I CALL her Queen — the lady of my love —
Since that in all one sceptreless may claim
Of true nobility to suit the name,
She is right royal, — and doth so approve
My loving homage. All that painter's art
And poet's fantasy delight to find
In queenliness is hers: the noble mind,
The stately bearing, and the gracious heart;
The voice most musical, the brow serene,
And beaming benediction — like a queen!
And O, such peerless beauty, that, I swear
(Recalling each fair face that loud Renown
Hath found, or feigned, beneath a jewelled crown)
I flatter queens, to call her "queenly fair!"

"WITH MY BODY I THEE WORSHIP."

Anglican Marriage Service.

THAT I adore thee, my most gracious queen,
More in my spirit than my body's sense
Of thine, were such incredible pretence
As I would scorn to utter. Thou hast seen
When eyes and lips, responsive to the heart,
Were bent in worship of thy lips and eyes,
Until, O bliss! each pleasure-pulsing part
Hath found its fellow in Love's sweet emprize;
Each answering other in such eager wise
As they would never cease to kiss and cling —
Ah! then meseemed amid the storm of sighs
I heard thy voice exclaiming, "O my King!
So may my soul be ever true to thine,
As with thy body thou dost worship mine!"

PAN IMMORTAL.

WHO weeps the death of Pan? Pan is not dead,
But loves the shepherds still;* still leads the fauns
In merry dances o'er the grassy lawns,
To his own pipes; as erst in Greece he led
The sylvan games, what time the god pursued
The beauteous Dryopè. The Naiads still
Haunt the green marge of every mountain rill;
The Dryads sport in every leafy wood;
Pan cannot die till Nature's self decease!
Full oft the reverent worshipper descries
His ruddy face and mischief-glancing eyes
Beneath the branches of old forest-trees
That tower remote from steps of worldly men,
Or hears his laugh far echoing down the glen!

* Pan curat oves, oviumque magistros. — VIRGIL.

THE BEAUTIFUL.

TO STELLA.

ALL things of beauty are not theirs alone
Who hold the fee; but unto him no less
Who can enjoy, than unto them who own,
Are sweetest uses given to possess.
For Heaven is bountiful; and suffers none
To make monopoly of aught that's fair;
The breath of violets is not for one,
Nor loveliness of women; all may share

Who can discern; and He who made the law,
"Thou shalt not covet!" gave the subtile power
By which, unsinning, I may freely draw
Beauty and fragrance from each perfect flower
That decks the wayside, or adorns the lea,
Or in my neighbor's garden blooms for me!

BEREAVEMENT.

NAY, weep not, dearest, though the child be dead;
He lives again in Heaven's unclouded life,
With other angels that have early fled
From these dark scenes of sorrow, sin, and strife.
Nay, weep not, dearest, though thy yearning love
Would fondly keep for earth its fairest flowers,
And e'en deny to brighter realms above
The few that deck this dreary world of ours:
Though much it seems a wonder and a woe
That one so loved should be so early lost,
And hallowed tears may unforbidden flow
To mourn the blossom that we cherished most,
Yet all is well; God's good design I see,
That where our treasure is, our hearts may be.

TO MY WIFE ON HER BIRTHDAY.

WHAT! ——ty years? — I never could have guessed it
By any token writ upon your brow,
Or other test of Time, — had you not now,
Just to surprise me, foolishly confessed it.
Well, on your word, of course, I must receive it;
Although (to say the truth) it is, indeed,
As proselytes sometimes accept a creed,
While in their hearts they really don't believe it!
While all around is changed, no change appears,
My darling Sophie, to these eyes of mine,
In aught of thee that I have deemed divine,
To mark the number of the vanished years, —
The kindly years that on that face of thine
Have spent their life, and, "dying, made no *sign!*"

TO SPRING.

"O VER PURPUREUM!" — Violet-colored Spring
Perhaps, good poet, in *your* vernal days
The simple truth might justify the phrase;
But now, dear Virgil, there is no such thing!

Perhaps, indeed, in your Italian clime,
Where o'er the year, if fair report be true,
Four seasons roll, instead of barely *two*,
There still may be a verdant vernal time;
But *here*, on these our chilly northern shores,
Where April gleams with January's snows, —
Not e'en a violet buds; and nothing "blows,"
Save blustering Boreas, — dreariest of bores.
O ver purpureum! where the Spring discloses
Her brightest purple on our lips and noses!

THE VICTIM

A Gallic bard the touching tale has told
How once — the customary dower to save —
A sordid sire his only daughter gave
To a rich suitor, ugly, base, and old.
The mother too (such mothers there have been)
With equal pleasure heard the formal vow,
"With all my worldly goods I thee endow,"
And gave the bargain an approving grin.
Then, to the girl, who stood with drooping head,
The pallid image of a wretch forlorn,
Mourning the hapless hour when she was born,
The Priest said, "Agnes, wilt thou this man wed?"
"Of this my marriage, holy man," said she,
"Thou art the first to say a word to me!"

TO ——.

Thine is an ever-changing beauty; now
With that proud look, so lofty yet serene
In its high majesty, thou seem'st a queen,
With all her diamonds blazing on her brow!
Anon I see — as gentler thoughts arise
And mould thy features in their sweet control —
The pure, white ray that lights a maiden's soul,
And struggles outward through her drooping eyes.
Anon they flash; and now a golden light
Bursts o'er thy beauty, like the Orient's glow,
Bathing thy shoulders' and thy bosom's snow,
And all the woman beams upon my sight!
I kneel unto the queen, like knight of yore;
The maid I love; the woman I adore!

TO A CLAM.

Dum tacent *clam*ant.

Inglorious friend! most confident I am
Thy life is one of very little ease;

Albeit men mock thee with their similes
And prate of being "happy as a clam"!
What though thy shell protects thy fragile head
From the sharp bailiffs of the briny sea?
Thy valves are, sure, no safety-valves to thee,
While rakes are free to desecrate thy bed,
And bear thee off,—as foemen take their spoil,—
Far from thy friends and family to roam;
Forced, like a Hessian, from thy native home,
To meet destruction in a foreign broil!
Though thou art tender, yet thy humble bard
Declares, O clam! thy case is shocking hard!

THE PORTRAIT.

A PRETTY picture hangs before my view;
The face, in little, of a Southern dame,
To me unknown (though not unknown to fame)
Save by the lines the cunning limner drew.
So grandly Grecian is the lady's head,
I took her for Minerva in disguise;
But when I marked the winning lips and eyes,
I thought of Aphrodite, in her stead;
And then I kissed her calm, unanswering mouth
(The *picture*'s mine) as any lover might,
In the deep fervor of a nuptial night,
And envied him who, in the "Sunny South,"
Calls *her* his own whose *shadow* can impart
Such very sunshine to a Northern heart!

SOMEWHERE.

SOMEWHERE — somewhere a happy clime there is,
A land that knows not unavailing woes,
Where all the clashing elements of this
Discordant scene are hushed in deep repose.
Somewhere — somewhere (ah me, that land to win!)
Is some bright realm, beyond the farthest main,
Where trees of Knowledge bear no fruit of sin,
And buds of Pleasure blossom not in pain.
Somewhere — somewhere an end of mortal strife
With our immortal yearnings; nevermore
The outer warring with the inner life
Till both are wretched. Ah, that happy shore!
Where shines for aye the soul's refulgent sun,
And life is love, and love and joy are one!

CHANGE NOT LOSS.

I DEEM to love and lose by love's decay
In either breast, or Fate's unkindly cross,
Is not, perforce, irreparable loss
Unto the larger. There may come a day,
Changing for precious gold Affection's dross,
When the great heart that sorely sighed to say
"Farewell!" unto the late-departed guest
(The transient tenant of an idle breast)
Shall, through the open portal, welcome there
A worthier than he who barred the place
Against the loitering lord, whose regal face
And princely step proclaim the lawful heir
Arrived — ah, happy day! — to fill the throne
By royal right divine his very own!

À LA PENSÉE.

COME to me, dearest! O, I cannot bear
These barren words of worship that to each
The other utters. In the finer speech
Of soft caresses let our souls declare
Their opulence of love; for while instead
We linger prattling, kind Occasion slips,
Leaving to pensive sighs the pallid lips
That else for pleasure had been ruby red.
Thanks! darling, thanks! Ah, happier than a king
In all beatitude of royal bliss
Is he whose mouth (again! O perfect kiss!)
May thus unto thine own with rapture cling;
For very joy of love content to live
Unquestioning if Love have more to give!

ABSENCE.

ABSENT from thee, belovéd, I am pent
In utter solitude, where'er I be;
My wonted pleasures give me small content
Wanting the highest, — to be shared by thee.
Reading, — I deem I misemploy my eyes,
Save in the sweet perusal of thine own;
Talking, — I mind me, with enamoured sighs,
What finer use my moving lips have known
When (as some kind orchestral instrument
Takes up the note the singer failed to reach)
Uncounted kisses rapturously lent
The finished meaning to my halting speech;
Remembering this, I fondly yearn for thee,
And cry, "O Time! haste! bring my love to me!"

BIENVENUE.

THRICE welcome day that ends the weary night
Of love in absence. Hush, my throbbing heart!
I hear her step, — she comes! who now can part
The happy twain whose soul and sense unite?
O, can it be? Is this no mocking dream?
Nay, by these clasping hands, that fervent kiss,
(Honey of Hybla!) and by this, and this,
I know thee for my own. Ah! now I deem
The gods grow envious of an earthly bliss
That dims Elysian raptures, and I seem
More blest than blest Endymion; for he
Saw not his love, while I, with doting eyes,
O joy ineffable! do gaze on thee,
Whose circling arms enclose my Paradise!

MISERERE.

I THINK the pity of this earthly life
Is love: So sighs a singer of the day,
Whose pensive strain my sympathetic lay
Sadly prolongs. Alas! the endless strife
Of love's sweet law with cold convention's rules;
The loving souls unloved; the perfect mate,
After long years of yearning, found — too late!
The treason of false friends; the frown of fools;
The fear that baffles bliss in beauty's arms;
The weariness of absence; and the dread
Of lover — or of love — untimely dead! —
Musing on these, and all the direful harms
That hapless human hearts are doomed to prove,
I think the pity of this life is love!

AQUINAS AND THE BISHOP.

INCREASE of worldly wealth is not alway
With growth in grace in manifest accord;
So quaint Aquinas hinted to my lord
The bishop, when, upon a certain day,
Surprised while counting o'er his ample hoard
Of shining ducats in a coffer stored,
The prelate said, "The time, you see, has gone
When dear old Mother Church was forced to say,
(*Acts second*) '*Gold and silver have I none!*'"
"Ah!" quoth Aquinas, shrewdly, "so I find;
But that, your Grace, was in the purer age,
The very same, be pleased to bear in mind,
When with her foes brave battle she could wage,
And say to sordid Satan, '*Get behind!*'"

EPIGRAMS.

EPIGRAMS.

THE EXPLANATION.

CHARLES, discoursing rather freely
Of the unimportant part
Which (he said) our clever women
Play in Science and in Art,
"Ah! —the sex you undervalue";
Cried his lovely cousin Jane.
"No, indeed!" responded Charley,
"Pray allow me to explain;
Such a paragon is woman,
That, you see, it *must* be true
She is always vastly better
Than the best that she can do!"

FAMILY QUARRELS.

"A FOOL," said Jeanette, "is a creature I hate!"
"But hating," quoth John, "is immoral;
Besides, my dear girl, it 's a terrible fate
To be found in a family quarrel!

TEACHING BY EXAMPLE.

"WHAT is the 'Poet's License,' say?"
Asked rose-lipped Anna of a poet.
"Now give me an example, pray,
That when I see one I may know it."
Quick as a flash he plants a kiss
Where perfect kisses always fall.
"Nay, sir! what liberty is this?"
"The *Poet's License*, — that is all!"

A COMMON ALTERNATIVE.

"Say, what 's to be done with this window, dear Jack?
The cold rushes through it at every crack."
Quoth John: "I know little of carpenter-craft,
But I think, my dear wife, you will have to go through
The very same process that other folks do, —
That is, you must *list* or submit to the *draught!*"

A PLAIN CASE.

WHEN Tutor Thompson goes to bed,
That very moment, it is said,
The cautious man puts out the light,

And draws the curtain snug and tight.
You marvel much why this should be,
But when his spouse you chance to see,
What seemed before a puzzling case
Is plain as — Mrs. Thompson's face!

OVER-CANDID.

Bouncing Bess, discoursing free,
Owned, with wondrous meekness,
Just one fault (what could it be?)
One peculiar weakness;
She in candor must confess
Nature failed to send her
Woman's usual tenderness
Toward the other gender.
Foolish Bessie! — thus to tell;
Had she not confessed it,
Not a man who knows her well
Ever would have guessed it!

NEVER TOO LATE TO MEND.

"Here, wife," said Will, "I pray you devote
Just half a minute to mend this coat,
Which a nail has chanced to rend."
"'T is ten o'clock!" said his drowsy mate.
"I know," said Will, "it is rather late;
But 't is 'never too late to mend'!"

AN EQUIVOCAL APOLOGY.

Quoth Madam Bas-bleu, "I hear you have said
Intellectual women are always your dread;
Now tell me, dear sir, is it true?"
"Why, yes," answered Tom, "very likely I may
Have made the remark, in a jocular way;
But then, on my honor, I did n't mean you!"

ON AN ILL-READ LAWYER.

An idle attorney besought a brother
For something to read, — some novel or other,
That was really fresh and new.
"Take Chitty!" replied his legal friend,
"There is n't a book that I could lend
Would prove more novel to you!"

ON A RECENT CLASSIC CONTROVERSY.

Nay, marvel not to see these scholars fight,
In brave disdain of certain scath and scar;
'T is but the genuine old Hellenic spite, —
"When Greek meets Greek, then comes the tug of war!"

ANOTHER.

Quoth David to Daniel, "Why is it these scholars
Abuse one another whenever they speak?"
Quoth Daniel to David, "It nat'rally follers
Folks come to hard words if they meddle with Greek!"

LUCUS A NON.

You'll oft find in books, rather ancient than recent,
A gap in the page marked with "*cetera desunt*,"
By which you may commonly take it for granted
The passage is wanting without being wanted;
And may borrow, besides, a significant hint
That *desunt* means simply *not* decent to print!

A CANDID CANDIDATE. [19]

When John was contending (though sure to be beat)
In the annual race for the Governor's seat,
And a crusty old fellow remarked, to his face,
He was clearly too young for so lofty a place, —
"Perhaps so," said John; "but consider a minute;
The objection will cease by the time I am in it!"

NEMO REPENTE TURPISSIMUS.

Bob Sawyer to a man of law
Repeating once the Roman saw,
"*Nemo repente*—" and the rest,
Was answered thus: "Well, I protest,
However classic your quotation,
I do not see the application."
"'T is plain enough," responded Sawyer:
"It takes three years to make a lawyer!"

TOO CANDID BY HALF.

As Tom and his wife were discoursing one day
Of their several faults, in a bantering way,
Said she: "Though my *wit* you disparage,
I'm sure, my dear husband, our friends will attest
This much, at the least, that my *judgment* is best."
Quoth Tom, "So they said at our marriage!"

CONJURGIUM NON CONJUGIUM.

Dick leads, it is known, with his vixenish wife,
In spite of their vows, such a turbulent life,
The social relation of Dick and his mate
Should surely be written The Conjurgal State!

CHEAP ENOUGH.

THEY 've a saying in Italy, pointed and terse,
That a pretty girl's smiles are the tears of the purse;
"What matter?" says Charley. "Can diamonds be cheap?
Let lovers be happy, though purses should weep!"

ON AN UGLY PERSON SITTING FOR A DAGUERREOTYPE.

HERE Nature in her glass — the wanton elf —
Sits gravely making faces at herself;
And, while she scans each clumsy feature o'er,
Repeats the blunders that she made before!

ON A FAMOUS WATER-SUIT.

MY wonder is really boundless,
That among the queer cases we try,
A land-case should often be groundless,
And a water-case always be dry!

KISSING CASUISTRY.

WHEN Sarah Jane, the moral Miss,
Declares 't is very wrong to kiss,
I'll bet a shilling I see through it;
The damsel, fairly understood,
Feels just as any Christian should, —
She 'd rather *suffer* wrong than *do* it!

TO A POETICAL CORRESPONDENT.

ROSE hints she is n't one of those
Who have the gift of writing prose;
But poetry is *une autre chose*,
And quite an easy thing to Rose!
As if an artist should decline,
For lack of skill, to paint a sign,
But, try him in the *landscape* line,
You 'll find his genius quite divine!

ON A LONG-WINDED ORATOR.

THREE Parts compose a proper speech
(So wise Quintilian's maxims teach),
But Loquax never can get through,
In *his* orations, more than two.
He does n't stick at the "Beginning";
His "Middle" comes as sure as sinning;
Indeed, the whole one might commend,
Could he contrive to make an "*End!*"

THE LOST CHARACTER.

JULIA is much concerned, God wot,
For the good name — she has n't got;

So mortgagors are often known
To guard the soil they deem their own,
As if, forsooth, they did n't know
The land was forfeit long ago!

A DILEMMA.

"WHENEVER I marry," says masculine Ann,
"I must really insist upon wedding a *man!*"
But what if the man (for men are but human)
Should be equally nice about wedding a *woman?*

THE THREE WIVES.

A JUBILATION.

MY *First* was a lady whose dominant passion
Was thorough devotion to parties and fashion;
My *Second*, regardless of conjugal duty,
Was only the worse for her wonderful beauty;
My *Third* was a vixen in temper and life,
Without one essential to make a good wife.
Jubilate! at last in my freedom I revel,
For I 'm clear of the World, and the Flesh, and the Devil!

NOTES.

NOTES.

Note 1. Page 46.

The tale of "Miralda" is based on a popular legend, of which an excellent prose version may be found in Ballou's History of Cuba.

Note 2. Page 50.

This piece is an imitation of a poem by Praed, entitled "My Partner." There are two other pieces in this collection, which, in deference to certain critics, I ought to mention as imitations of the same author. There is, indeed, a resemblance, in the form of the stanza and in the antithetic style of treatment, to several poems of Praed; but as both the metre and the method are of ancient date, and are fairly the property of whomsoever may employ them, no further acknowledgment seem necessary than that which is contained in this note. The same remark will apply to "The proud Miss MacBride," which is written in the measure, and (*longo intervallo*) after the manner, of Hood's incomparable "Golden Legend."

Note 3. Page 88.

"Potter, the Great Magician," — a clever conjurer of a former generation, — is still vividly remembered by many people in New Hampshire and Vermont.

Note 4. Page 118.

The first stanza of this poem I must credit to a fragment of an anonymous German song, which I found afloat in some newspaper. The remaining stanzas are built upon the suggestion of the first.

Note 5. Page 146.

If my version of "The Ugly Aunt" is more simple in plot than the prose story in the "Norske Folke-eventer," it certainly gains something in refinement by the variation.

Note 6. Page 158.

I 'm aware this dainty version
  Is n't quite the thing to go forth

For the Grecian's "*suggenesthai*,"
"*Ep oikematos*," and so forth;
But propriety 's a virtue
I 'm always bound to show forth.

NOTE 7. Page 162.

The tradition of the Wandering Jew is very old and popular in every country of Europe, and is the theme of many romances in prose and verse. The old Spanish writers make the narrative as diabolical and revolting as possible; while the French and Flemish authors soften the legend (as in the present ballad) into a pathetic story of sin, suffering, and genuine repentance.

NOTE 8. Page 176.

This story is found in many modern languages. In the present version, the traveller is a Frenchman in Holland; in another, he is an Englishman in France; and in a third, a Welshman in some foreign country. The Welsh story (a poem, of which an anonymous correspondent has sent me a translation) is perhaps the best; though it is impossible to say which is the oldest.

NOTE 9. Page 236.

"*To show, for once, that Dutchmen are not dull.*"

Père Bouhours seriously asked "if a German could be a *bel esprit*." This concise question was answered by Kramer, in a ponderous work entitled *Vindiciæ nominis Germanicæ*.

NOTE 10. Page 240.

"*In closest girdle, O reluctant Muse,*
In scantiest skirts, and lightest-stepping shoes."

Imitated from the opening couplet of Holmes's "Terpsichore," —

"*In narrowest girdle, O reluctant Muse,*
In closest frock, and Cinderella shoes."

NOTE 11. Page 240.

"'*She stoops to conquer*' *in a* '*Grecian curve.*'"

Terence, who wrote comedies a little more than two thousand years ago, thus alludes to this and a kindred custom *then* prevalent among the Roman girls: —

"Virgines, quas matres student
Demissis humeris esse, vincto corpore, ut graciles fiant."

The sense of the passage may be given in English, with sufficient accuracy, thus: —

Maidens, whom fond, maternal care has graced
With stooping shoulders, and a cinctured waist.

NOTE 12. Page 242.

"*Their tumid tropes for simple 'Buncombe' made.*"

Many readers, who have heard about "making speeches for Buncombe," may not be aware that the phrase originated as follows: A member of Congress from the county of Buncombe, North Carolina, while pronouncing a magniloquent set-speech, was interrupted by a remark from the Chair, that "the seats were quite vacant." "Never mind, never mind," replied the orator, "I'm talking for Buncombe!"

NOTE 13. Page 243.

"*Till rising high in rancorous debate,*
And higher still in fierce, envenomed hate."

"Sed jurgia prima sonare
Incipiunt animis ardentibus; hæc tuba rixæ;
Dein clamore pari concurritur, et vice teli
Sævit nuda manus." — JUV. Sat. xv.

NOTE 14. Page 245.

"*Not uninvited to her task she came.*"

This poem was written at the instance of the Associated Alumni of Middlebury College, and spoken before that Society, July 22, 1846.

NOTE 15. Page 245.

"*No singer's trick, — conveniently to bring*
A sudden cough when importuned to sing."

The capriciousness of musical folk, here alluded to, is by no means peculiar to our times. A little before the Christian era, Horace had occasion to scold the Roman singers for the same fault: —

"Omnibus hoc vitium est cantoribus, inter amicos,
Ut nunquam inducant animum cantare rogati;
Injussi nunquam desistant." — Sat. iii.

NOTE 16. Page 257.

"*And hush the wail of Peter Plymley's ghost.*"

Rev. Sydney Smith, the English author and wit, lately deceased, who, having speculated in Pennsylvania Bonds to the damage of his estate, berated "the rascally repudiators" with much spirit, and lamented his losses in many excellent jests.

NOTE 17. Page 258.

"*Unfriendly hills no longer interpose*
As stubborn walls to geographic foes,
Nor envious streams run only to divide
The hearts of brethren ranged on either side.

"Lands intersected by a narrow frith
Abhor each other. Mountains interposed
Make enemies of nations, who had else
Like kindred drops been mingled into one."
Cowper.

NOTE 18. Page 259.

"*Aristophanes, whose humor run*
In vain endeavor to be-'cloud' the sun."

An allusion to the comedy of "The Clouds," written in ridicule of Socrates.

NOTE 19. Page 299.

An anecdote of the gubernatorial canvass in Vermont in the year 1859.

Let those laugh who — lose!

THE END.

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